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LEFT BEHIND.

BY WM. MACKINTOSH.

Gray Father Time has turned his back
Upon the old year gone and dead,
And hastes along the untried track
Of days unborn and strange ahead.

Thus all may see to leave behind
Deeds of the past that evil bore,
And forward press, with will inclined,
To better do than heretofore.

Good should excel the bad, and so
Let's bravely rend fell habit's chain,
Nor do nor say aught save we know
'Tis right and just in virtue's train.

A Strange Wooing.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "IN SEARCH OF HIM," "WHICH WAS HER DEAREST?" "UNDER A CLOUD," "A SLEEPING PRINCESS," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"DOWN train signalled, Morison?"

"Yes, sir—due now, sir."

Mr. Devon alighted from his high dog-cart, handed the reins to a porter, and entered the quiet little country railway station, with the self-confident air of one well known to the officials and held somewhat in awe by them.

The officials at Lookerbie were limited to the station-master, Morison, one porter, and a boy; and, in the eyes of all three, Lord Eynesford's agent was a very great man indeed. He looked the part fairly well, being tall and broad-shouldered, was always well-dressed, and altogether had the appearance of a man in prosperous circumstances. He was fair, with a close-cropped red beard streaked with silver, small gray eyes, and a rather florid complexion—a man whose orders were obeyed at once; but few people were quite decided as to whether they liked him or not.

"More'n a week since we see you round here, Mr. Devon," remarked the station-master, following the agent out on the platform.

"Rather better than a week—yes, you're right, Morison. Finished that tiresome business about the draining of those cottages at Ollerton at last! Thankless work, all that going to and fro, and the tenants only finding fault with you for your pains!"

"No chance of the Earl coming back, I suppose, sir?"

"Not the least!" returned Mr. Devon, with strong emphasis—"not the least!"

"It's a pity. He's leaving the place too long, to my thinking. Not as I means to say it could be in better hands than yours, sir," added the man hurriedly, in response to a quick glance from Mr. Devon's close-set eyes; "but for the sake of his own popularity."

"Ah, yes; quite so! But I'm here this evening on a pleasant errand, Morison"—with an evident desire to change the subject. "My youngest daughter is coming to live at home at last, and I'm expecting her by this train."

"Indeed, sir? I wish you joy," Morison said, turning away, as he spoke, to ring the bell, for the express was now close at hand.

It was late in the afternoon of a superb day in early summer. The train had just traversed a most beautiful stretch of country. Wood, river, and boldly-rising hills were its chief characteristics; and most of it was part of the grand estate of Grange-le-Cross, the property of the Earl of Eynesford.

Mr. Devon experienced a considerable amount of excitement during the few moments that passed while the train was coming to a standstill at the platform. He was wondering whether he should know his own child, for he had not seen her for seven years.

His wife's sister, a maiden lady of considerable means, living at Hampstead, had adopted her youngest niece; and, as they had always travelled when the girl was not at school, she had never been able to visit her own family. Miss Clayton, however, had died suddenly, bequeathing almost all her property to a struggling younger brother with a large family, and her adopted daughter found herself left with only a small annuity of about twenty pounds.

Mr. Devon was rather pleased than otherwise. He was well-to-do, and had always grudged his sister-in-law the sole possession of his youngest child. It was, therefore, with no ordinary feeling that his sharp eyes scanned the few passengers who alighted, looking for some one bearing a slight resemblance to the child he remembered, with her brown hair streaming half-way down her back. Suddenly a light hand touched his arm, and, turning, he saw a tall, slender girl, in a perfectly-fitting black dress.

"Papa!"

Certainly the fresh young voice was a little broken and tremulous.

"My own darling!"

All that was tender in Joseph Devon's nature awoke at the sight of her. He took her in his arms and kissed her warmly.

"This is a welcome! Dear papa, how good of you to come and meet me!"

"My dear child, you must be tired to death! Come; we mustn't linger, or mamma's impatience will make her quite ill. Morison, have you Miss Devon's trunks? That's right. Let them be carried to the dog-cart. Not too grand to ride in a dog-cart—eh, Ethel?"

"Oh, no, papa! But, see—please don't forget my precious dog. You have room for my beloved Pixie?"

"For a white elephant, if you had brought one, love!" said her father, who seemed as if he could not make too much fuss over this newly-found daughter.

The wiry Scotch terrier was soon ensconced at his mistress's feet; Devon gathered the reins in his practised fingers, and they started.

Once fairly on the road, he raised the girl's face up by the chin, and looked earnestly at it. The pleasant impression he had received at the first glance deepened to one of keen delight. Ethel Devon was undoubtedly a beauty.

The face looked younger, and its expression was more childlike than it had appeared to him at first sight. It was a lovely head, set daintily upon a slender neck, rising from beautifully-proportioned shoulders. The nut-brown hair, drawn lightly back from the low brow, was just dark enough to relieve the paleness of the skin. Her eyes were blue, and shaded by thick black lashes. The chin was small and firm; but her mouth was perhaps the most attractive feature of her sweet face, and its charm lay in its expression, for any one would have placed implicit trust in the truth, constancy, and affection of its possessor.

With a thrill of pride, Joseph Devon realized that she closely resembled her mother, the clergyman's daughter of good family, and was not at all like her yeoman father.

There was a slight feeling of anxiety mingled with the delight with which he scanned Ethel, for he was shrewd enough to see that she possessed a better attribute than beauty. From top to toe—from the dainty arrangement of her hair under the little travelling hat, to her well-fitting gloves and neat boots—there was a "finish" and "fitness" about her which belong so peculiarly to London girls.

"I hope my pet will be able to make herself happy at Grange-le-Cross," he said almost pleadingly.

"Oh, father, dear! And mamma—is she quite well?"

"Longing for a peep at you. She will be surprised when I bring her such a tall daughter. You top Grace and Elinor, I declare—unless it is that your being so slender makes you look taller?"

"Am I taller than Nell and Gracie? What bad manners of me!" exclaimed Ethel, laughing brightly.

"And so you stayed with the Montgomerys when aunt Sophia died?" continued her father. "And they are Sir Charles Montgomery's nieces? I suppose aunt Sophia had a large circle of friends—saw plenty of society—eh?"

"Oh, yes; we visited a great deal!"

"And you found it pleasant?"

"Very—very pleasant."

"You'll miss it here"—with an anxious inflection of the voice.

She laid her cheek upon his shoulder, clasping his arm with both hands, for they were in a quiet part of the road.

"Think what I have to make up for the loss!" she said lovingly and softly.

Mr. Devon's heart swelled with love and pride.

"Then you haven't left your heart in London—eh?" he said playfully.

"I have tried to reserve a few fragments for you and mamma," returned his daughter, with a quiet smile, betraying none of her inward annoyance.

His remark had been a perfectly harmless and natural one, yet it had jarred upon Ethel.

A moment afterwards, a high two-wheeled game-cart dashed round a bend in the road, at the sight of which Ethel blushed more than any girl likes to be seen blushing when she returns a gentleman's salutation.

It was a dashing turn-out altogether. A spruce groom sat behind, and the reins were held by a handsome young man, in a gray shooting-suit, with hat to match. A look of delight and surprise lighted up his face as he took off his hat to Miss Devon; and, as though he could scarcely realise the fact of her being in that part of the country, he was guilty of the rudeness of turning half-round in his seat to gaze after the rapidly-disappearing dog-cart.

"Fitzwarrene?" exclaimed Mr. Devon, in tones of mingled astonishment and gratification. "I didn't know Hector Fitzwarrene was included in your list of acquaintances, Ethel?"

"I saw a good deal of him in London," answered Ethel quietly, having recovered her self possession by this time.

"By Jove! Did you though? But I'm afraid it will be a mortification for you, my child. They are quite in the county set—we—er—don't visit at Warrendale"—this with evident reluctance.

"If Mr. Fitzwarrene thinks fit to cut me here, having known me in London—why, I shall resign the pleasure of his acquaintance without a regret," said Ethel composedly; "but, papa, I did not know he belonged to these parts."

"Oh, didn't you hear? The death of his cousin, Hugo Fitzwarrene, made him heir to the baronetcy; so old Sir Hugo asked him down; but they say the two don't get on very well together. He's rather whimsical, is old Sir Hugo—especially since his son's death. It would be just like him to leave the estates away from the title—there are only a few acres entailed as I happen to know; so I wouldn't make sure of Warrendale, if I were you, Ethel."

"Make sure of Warrendale, papa—I?"

It was fortunate that at this juncture the conversation was interrupted. The dog-cart had stopped at a gate, over which was leaning a young lady some ten years older than Ethel, with a good-humored countenance, sharp features like her father, and sandy hair.

"Nell—dear, darling old Nell!"

"How are you, Ettie—how are you?"

And, having fastened back the gate, Miss Devon proceeded to run before them along the drive, exclaiming:

"Mamma—mamma—they've come!"

Ethel received a very tender greeting from her mother, being folded in her loving arms and kissed repeatedly.

Mrs. Devon was still very sweet-looking, but with a face prematurely old. She was a disappointed woman, and her disappointment had made her apathetic. She had married Joe Devon for love, declaring that she despised distinctions of rank.

She had committed the fatal mistake of settling in the neighborhood where every one had known Mr. Devon's parents as small farmers, not of the most refined description; and she had bitterly resented the ill-bred arrogance, as she thought it, which prevented the county families from visiting her. Mr. Devon's post as agent to an absentee landlord was, however, too lucrative to be abandoned for such a cause as this.

But, perhaps, the most poignant sting of all was the conviction, which had gradually dawned upon her, that, after all, her husband was not, in the true sense of the word, a gentleman.

Brook Lodge was a low white house, covered with creepers, and with a pretty stream running through the garden. A well-kept tennis-lawn lay on one side, and the whole was situated conveniently near the high-road from Lookerbie.

Mrs. Devon's inherent good taste had made her drawing-room a marvel of comfort and elegance, and the flowers in her conservatory were the envy and despair of the Vicar's wife.

Ethel, whose impressions of her old home were not very vivid, was delighted with the place. She ran from room to room, examining everything with childish delight and eager interest.

"It is all so fresh—so fresh and sweet, after London! The colors are so bright—the air smells of roses! Oh, mamma, how good of you to make my room so pretty! It is a little bower of whiteness! How nice it will look when I have arranged all my treasures in it!"

"Did aunt Sophia have all your dresses made out?" asked Grace, with a touch of envy.

Grace was eight-and-twenty. Her complexion, once a pretty pink-and-white, was now of a dull brick-color, which did not harmonize with her light hair, in spite of the elaborately curled "fringe". Her dress, too, though intended to be stylish, conveyed an idea of "bounce".

She wore a muslin apron, adorned profusely with colored bows, which was intended for an *ingenue*, and did not suit her well-developed figure. Compared with Nell, she had always imagined herself the beauty of the family; but all such delusions vanished as she saw Ethel's face and her own side by side in the mirror.

"Most of my dresses were made out; but I often altered and repaired at home, with Mason's help," answered Ethel. She had taken off her dress, and was brushing out her soft, lustrous hair. "I am quite a dressmaker," she added.

As she thus spoke, good-humored Nell ran into the room.

"I say, Grace—Ethel knows Fitzwarrene!"

"Knows Fitzwarrene!"

"Yes, indeed! They met him driving to-day, and pa said he looked as delighted

as he could be to see Ethel! Only fancy!"

"I don't see anything very surprising in that," said Ethel, trying not to feel annoyed. "Surely the meeting of a London acquaintance in the country is not so very wonderful!"

"Oh, no! But Fitzwarrene!"

"Mr. Fitzwarrene used often to visit at aunt Sophia's," explained Ethel.

"But they're such swells, the Fitzwarrenes," said Nell. "What fun it is to think that you know him, Ethel! Isn't he good-looking? He'll be right under your nose on Sunday, for the Fitzwarrene pew is just in front of ours."

"Really? How very interesting!" returned Ethel sarcastically, being very glad that the dinner-bell put a stop to further questions.

She fervently wished that Hector Fitzwarrene had taken his drive in any other direction that afternoon. Was she to be bantered about this man because he had happened to bow to her in a country lane? It was insupportable; and she went downstairs, chafing a good deal at the bitter drop in her cup of sweetness.

CHAPTER II.

ETHEL'S first few days at Grange-le-Cross went swiftly by, in an almost continuous round of visits, and innumerable games of lawn-tennis, and then Sunday came—a fair, bright Sunday—and the Devons started for church.

Ethel wore a simply-made black grenadine dress, which fitted her admirably. She had fastened a cluster of roses at her throat; and, with a parasol of dainty black lace held over the proud little head, she made a picture worth looking at.

They had not been seated more than a minute when Lady Fitzwarrene, a small, mean, faded-looking woman, walked in, followed by her nephew, who, after entering the Fitzwarrene pew, looked around to see who was occupying the corner of the seat behind.

He was a well-grown young fellow, with light-brown hair and large, handsome, hazel eyes. His moustache was a shade darker than his hair, and his features were refined and aristocratic in cast.

He pulled his moustache and stole glances at Ethel, to the satisfaction of Mrs. Devon, and the annoyance of Grace, who had occupied that corner on the previous Sunday, and had manœuvred fruitlessly for one look from the heir of Warrendale.

The service at Grange-le-Cross was very beautiful, and it really seemed as if, to-day, Ethel's whole heart was in the music and the prayers. When the service was over, and the Fitzwarrenes had risen and left the church, Ethel did not seem to be in a hurry to follow, but waited fully two minutes to adjust the veil of her mother's bonnet.

By the time they gained the porch the Warrendale carriage had disappeared; but, on reaching the churchyard gate, they saw young Fitzwarrene standing there, switching the dock-leaves with his cane. He darted forward at their approach, raising his hat, with unmistakable eagerness.

"Miss Devon! It is as wonderful as it is pleasant to discover that you are a native of these parts!"

"I am just as much surprised to find you here, Mr. Fitzwarrene! How small the world is!"

The usual civilities were exchanged, and the young man showed a distinct inclination to stroll down the road to Brook Lodge. His conversation was unrestrained and easy, which induced Mrs. Devon to drop the querulous air of self-assertion which the fact of feeling herself in a false position had caused her to adopt. She appeared at her best, and Ethel was ashamed of herself for having felt relieved at her father's absence.

"He must see that mamma is a lady," she thought.

When they reached the wicket-gate, Fitzwarrene, who had been walking with Mrs. Devon, turned and stood waiting for the others to come up.

"Will you come in, Mr. Fitzwarrene?" asked the lady shyly.

"Not now, thanks. I fancy I'm due at lunch; but if I may call——"

"We shall be pleased," murmured Mrs. Devon.

"Do not be rash!" said Ethel, raising her clear blue eyes to his face. "Mother says Lady Fitzwarrene does not visit us."

"My aunt visits nowhere—she is incorrigible," answered Hector lightly; "and so she ought to be very grateful to me for trying to perform some of her neglected duties."

"We have a few friends to tennis on Thursday," ventured Mrs. Devon, the blush caused by Ethel's rash speech dying away at Fitzwarrene's reply.

"You are very good! Half-past three? I shall remember! May the Fates send us as fine a day as this!"

He raised his hat, and in a few moments was half-way down the shady road.

"Well," said Grace, drawing a deep breath, "he could not have done more! No—he really could not have done more."

The new magnet at Brook Lodge proved wonderfully attractive. Every one who was asked to the tennis-party on Thursday accepted, and everybody came.

Ethel, at her mother's urgent desire appeared in white—fresh soft Indian muslin. The completeness and elegance of her wardrobe were still the wonder and admiration of her sisters. Grace had taken the pattern of this particular white dress in pink flowered sateen; but somehow the effect was not the same.

Fitzwarrene was among the early arrivals—a fact which was, of course, commented upon with much excitement by all present.

It seemed to the young man a long time before he could get to Ethel's side. Mr. Devon was rather effusive in his greetings, and was unwise in urging his guest to drink champagne and seltzer-water at such an early period.

It chafed Hector unreasonably to see Ethel playing tennis with a red-haired bashful youth, son of the Vicar, and looking as if she positively enjoyed it. It was still worse when he was prevailed upon to play in the next set, and Ethel went gaily off to show the doctor's little girls the way to the gooseberry-bushes.

The end of the game came at last, however, and he was off at once—to find her, by great good luck, still among the patch of bushes.

"Do you like gooseberries?" she asked gravely.

"Awfully! Let me help you to gather them. Miss Devon, you have hardly spoken a word to me all the afternoon."

"Oh, what a fib! I gave you a long account of the Fosters' picnic! There's gratitude!"

"Yes—with seven or eight people listening! I mean you have not spoken to me—just me—myself."

"I see! I am never to address myself to you in the presence of others? Or, if I do, it doesn't count?"

"There—as usual, no matter what a fellow says, you twist it the wrong way."

She laughed, and looked at him deprecatingly.

"Do forgive me. It is so nice to talk to some one who—who understands that sort of talk. Every one here is kind and good; but you know they all—even my own mother and sisters—are strange to me. You know I can't count you as a stranger, can I? Have some gooseberries?"

As Hector took the proffered fruit, his hand closed over hers.

"You count me as a friend, then?"

"Of course I do—any one who belongs to my happy life at auntie's. I am happy here too—oh, very happy! But still, I do love to remember old times. Do you recollect the theatricals at the Marstons'?"

Of course he did. They had an inexhaustible fund of common recollections; they plaked gooseberries and chatted, looked into each other's eyes and laughed, forgetting all about the time.

"They seem to be very gay in this part of the world," said Hector presently. "One has plenty of invitations."

"Yes; but the great event of the year comes off during the second week in August—the fete, they call it."

"Indeed! What sort of an entertainment is that?"

"They have been explaining it to me. It had a very small beginning, I believe. When Lord Glanvil was alive, old Lord Eynesford used to have the school-feast in his grounds. Then he would insist on inviting every one he knew to be present. Then tents were erected—one for the children to have tea in, and one for the guests. At last another tent was added for dancing, and I believe it is great fun."

"I should think so. Is it still held in Grange-le-Cross grounds?"

"Oh, no! The present Lord Eynesford is always away, you know."

Fitzwarrene's lip curled in scorn.

"Indeed?" he said.

"You look as if you knew him," Ethel observed.

"If you knew as much as I know of him, Miss Ethel, you would be inclined to think that the best part of him is—his absenteeism."

"What sort of a man is he?" asked Ethel. "Father says he takes no interest in the estate."

"Nor in any one except himself. The Warristouns are a queer set. He was only the Honorable Ranulf Warristoun when I first knew him."

"Father thinks he felt Lord Glanvil's death very much."

"Yes; it was an awful affair, and caused a great sensation at the time; but this younger brother was always a strange fellow. Where do they hold the fete now-a-days, Miss Devon?"

"In one of the meadows—father's meadows. Will you still be in the neighborhood when the affair comes off?"

"If I am above ground—yes." They were sauntering along on their way to rejoin the others, and, while still concealed by the tall laurel hedge, he paused, possessed himself of both her hands, and said, pleadingly, "Ethel, promise me the first waltz at the fete—promise you will give it to me."

A soft pink color stole into her cheeks; her eyelids drooped.

"Yes," she said slowly, "you may have it; that is if you are still at Warrendale, and have not rushed wildly off to Ireland for the shooting, or to Switzerland mountaineering."

As she spoke, she broke away from him, and the next moment was gone.

In the afternoon of the next day, the Warrendale carriage drove up to Brook Lodge, and the footman, after inquiring if Mrs. Devon were at home, assisted cross, pale, Lady Fitzwarrene to alight.

Her ladyship's nephew had frightened her into calling. She had no idea there was any necessity for it. How should she know that Mrs. Devon had been a Miss Clayton? But, of course, if dear Hector wished it, she would call and give Miss Clayton's adopted daughter a card for her dance.

Mrs. Devon was sitting in her pretty drawing-room, which was at the back of the house, so she had not seen who was coming, and had no time to run away and put on far too fine a dress for the occasion before the trim parlor-maid ushered in Lady Fitzwarrene.

Found thus, seated naturally at work, the impression made by the agent's wife was favorable. Ethel, being summoned, came in through the conservatory, with her racquet in her hand. A certain sense of being "on approbation" brought a blush to her cheeks, and caused a small amount of pretty confusion.

She was, however, too thoroughly at home in a drawing-room to be ill at ease for long; and, after chatting for a few moment with Hector's aunt, she went to the low gipsy-table and poured out tea, thereby giving her ladyship an opportunity to admire the pretty turn of her wrist, set off by the black sleeve.

Presently Lady Fitzwarrene again announced the object of her visit—to ask Ethel, not only to the approaching dance at Warrendale, but to be a guest in the house for a couple of days beforehand, to avoid difficulties in the way of finding a chaperon.

It was rather a rude invitation, considering that it was given in the presence of the girl's natural chaperon—her mother; but poor Mrs. Devon had, before her daughter's entrance, received it with profuse thanks.

"I am sure Ethel will be charmed! I have been feeling anxious for her, knowing how she would miss the society she used to have in London," she had said. Now she glanced at the girl, hoping she would accept, with a due amount of "empressement."

Ethel had a blue-and-white tea-cup in one hand, and a tiny sponge-biscuit in the other. She sat down gracefully on a very low chair as she answered—

"It is very kind of you to think of me, Lady Warrendale, but mother has probably told you that dances for me are out of the question just now. My aunt, Miss Clayton, has not been dead two months."

Refused—and refused so naturally too, with such an unanswerable reason! Lady Fitzwarrene took her leave, feeling abashed, although she scarcely knew why.

"Oh, Ethel, I think you should have gone, dear!" sighed her mother, when they were alone.

"Visit at a house where my mother and elder sisters are not admitted? No, thank you, mother dear," said Ethel brightly.

CHAPTER III.

ABOUT three weeks later, on a Saturday evening, Ethel stood in the doorway of Brook Lodge, dressed in a simple white gown, a basket of water-lilies in her hand. Her world was all so bright; not a cloud dimmed it.

Hector Fitzwarrene had been rather offended about the dance; but Ethel had looked up at him, when he remonstrated, with such an expression of astonishment in her eyes, that, like his aunt, he had felt ashamed of himself. As she stood in the porch, her father came over the rustic bridge and up the path.

"Well, little woman, where are you off to?"

"To the churchyard, papa dear. Your tea is in the drawing-room. You don't look well, dear."

"It's this heat; I'm fagged out," Joseph Devon answered; and his looks agreed with his words. "Don't be away long, my pet," he said fondly.

"No, papa; I shall be back in less than an hour."

And, with a bright nod and a quick, loving kiss, she was gone.

The churchyard was a beautiful and sunny spot for summer evenings, and Ethel visited it every Saturday, to tend and water the grave of her twin brother, Edgar. She had trained delicate ivy round the base of the white stone cross, and she had only to cut off a few dead geraniums and arrange her freshly-made cross of white lilies. Then she turned to perform the same service for another grave, which stood not far off—a grave with a massive white marble cross and marble coping, but which hitherto no hand had ever approached to keep away the weeds or the disfiguring brambles. Of late, however, it had been rendered not only neat, but beautiful, by the girl who knelt there now.

She had taken off her hat and the sunbeams shone upon her bright hair and the white gown she wore. One firm, pink hand rested on the snowy marble, while she deftly scraped away some moss which had presumed to spring up in a chink of the steps.

The base of the cross bore the following inscription:

"To the most beloved memory of
GUY, LORD GLANVIL,
Elder son of Guy, fifth Earl of Eynesford.
He was foully murdered, being shot down
by an unknown hand, while walking
in the grounds of Chateau St. Etienne, in France, his father's estate, whither he had gone to
arrest the progress of the
decline into which
he had fallen.
His age was twenty-six years and two months.
'Behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke.'"

That inscription had been carved more than eight years before, and it had never lost its pathos in Ethel's eyes. On the step below was inscribed:

"GUY, FIFTH EARL OF EYNESFORD,
Who survived his son only six months and three days."

Ethel, still leaning on the marble arm of the cross, read over both inscriptions; and, as she read, she became aware of some one standing between her and the warm rays of the setting sun; some one whose shadow lay across the grave and fell upon her white draperies.

She slowly raised her eyes, and they rested on the figure of a tall man, who was watching her, his hands behind his back.

The stranger's head was bare, his short black hair rather rough. A heavy black moustache imparted a sombre, sinister expression to his face; his eyes were at once restless and weary—dark gray eyes, sunk deeply under irritable, narrowly marked brows. His figure was tall, lean, wiry, and his complexion very dark.

As their eyes met, Ethel was conscious of an indefinable feeling of fear creeping over her. She thought his persistent stare very rude, and, after a momentary pause of astonishment, turned to pick up her basket.

"Who are you?"

The question, put roughly and abruptly, did not frighten her; it only made her excessively angry. She put on her hat, and prepared to pass her impertinent questioner in lofty silence; for pass him she must, to get out of the churchyard. To her astonishment, he stood before her, blocking up the pathway.

"Excuse my abruptness; but I have been watching you for some time——"

"Excuse me for telling you, sir, that the fact possesses no interest for me—and allow me to pass."

"And seeing you near that grave bearing the name of Devon, I thought you might be some relation of the agent; and, if so, I will trouble you with a message for him."

"I do not carry messages for strangers, sir. Once more, will you allow me to pass?"

The girl's heart was beginning to beat fast, for the churchyard was lonely, and her antagonist looked formidable.

"Permit me to introduce myself," said

the man sarcastically. "I am Lord Eynesford."

"I do not believe you," she cried, looking him full in the face.

"So I see." Taking out a card-case, he handed her a card. "I arrived from Dover an hour ago, and came to visit my brother's grave. Seeing you here, I thought I might venture to ask you to inform Mr. Devon of my arrival, and to tell him that I will call round at his house at eight or nine o'clock this evening. I must apologize for startling you."

"You did startle me considerably," replied Ethel, still indignantly. "If you had begun by telling me who you were, some slight awkwardness might have been avoided. I will give my father your card and your message." And, with a distant bow, she walked away.

It was time to dress for dinner when she reached home, and she did not see her father till they met at the table.

Mr. Devon was looking less tired and worried; indeed, he seemed to be in unusually good spirits.

"Well, Miss Ethel, I've a bit of news for you! I've been riding, and I met a gentleman!"

"That's an odd coincidence, papa! I have a bit of news for you, too! I've been walking, and I met an—well, a man!"

"I don't think you'll have much difficulty in guessing who it was I met."

"I think you will be very much astonished when I tell you whom I have seen."

"Of course, I know whom papa met," said Grace. "Wasn't yours the same, Ethel?"

"How can I possibly tell, till I know of whom you are speaking?"

"The young man I met was Hector Fitzwarrene. There now!" exclaimed Mr. Devon jovially.

"The I man met was Lord Eynesford. There now!" cried Ethel gaily.

Mr. Devon was pouring himself out a glass of sherry as she spoke, and he started so violently at her words, that the little cut-glass decanter fell to the ground with a crash.

"My dear!" exclaimed his wife reproachfully.

"The—the heat! I have not been myself all day. Confound my plaguey awkwardness! Jane, you must go to the cellar. Poor joke of yours, that, Ethel! Lord Eynesford is in Arabia."

"It seems I am better informed than his lordship's agent," said the girl, laughing as she passed him the card which the Earl had given to her. "I was to give you a message—that he would be around to see you at eight or nine o'clock this evening."

Mr. Devon stared stupidly at the piece of pasteboard. His cheeks were flushed, his lips dry and feverish.

"Some mistake—mistake," he said huskily—"his lordship is in Arabia!"

"When did you meet him, Ethel? What is he like? What did he say?" cried Elinor and Grace in unison.

"He is tall, ugly, and very unpleasant-looking," answered Ethel. "I never saw any one whose looks I disliked more."

"I hope, my dearest, you said your father would go up to the Hall? I hope you said he could not think of troubling his lordship to come down here?" said Mrs. Devon nervously.

"No; I said nothing of the sort! He addressed me abruptly, not to say rudely. He used the sort of tone he would employ to—to his butler's daughter," said Ethel, drawing up her head, and flushing angrily at the remembrance. "His tone was insufferable! We are not dependants of his."

"You're a little fool—you don't know what you're talking about!" Mr. Devon said.

They were the first rough words that his youngest daughter had heard from him.

"What a little democrat you are, Ethel!" exclaimed her mother.

"If all noblemen were like Lord Eynesford, I think every one would be a democrat!" said Ethel warmly.

No one replied and dinner proceeded rather silently.

When the girls left the room, their father rose and walked to the door. His step seemed slow and feeble; in the half-light he looked old and bent.

"My dear," said his wife approaching him, "you're not well!"

"I'm not. I'm going to my study till Lord Eynesford comes."

The girls were talking together upon the lawn when Lord Eynesford came through the wicket gate, attracted perhaps by the sound of their voices. The wicket-gate opened upon the lane, and was hidden from the house by over-arching trees. It was always used by the family; visitors walked up the drive.

Mrs. Devon, who was seated under the verandah, rose to receive him with ill-concealed agitation.

"Is Devon at home?" asked the Earl, leaning against one of the supports of the verandah, to the detriment of the honeysuckle.

"Oh, yes; he received your lordship's message! Of course he is in. I will let him know at once that your lordship is here."

"I want to speak to your daughter, Ethel. Ah, there she is on the lawn. Will you kindly call her?"

Ethel, being summoned, reluctantly approached, and favored his lordship with such a bow as might be bestowed by a lady on some friend of her husband's whom she does not quite like having to receive as a friend.

"I think you dropped this in the churchyard."

He handed her a small packet, which, on being opened, contained her handkerchief, with "Ethel" embroidered in pink in the corner.

"It is mine. Thank you!" she answered coldly.

"I have to thank you for delivering my message, Miss Ethel," he went on, in unpleasant half-sneering tones.

"Excuse me, Lord Eynesford, you are breaking the honey-suckle. You are leaning against it. Thank you," concluded the girl coolly, as he relieved the plant of his weight.

"You take a great interest in the flowers," he remarked, eyeing her critically.

"I dislike to see anything crushed or trampled upon," she replied quietly, as she bent back a displaced tendril of the tender creeper.

Mr. Devon just then appeared at the window.

"Delighted to see you back, my lord. You come just at the right time. There were several points on which I wished to consult you; but I understood from your last letter that you would remain in Arabia at least three months longer. Climate did not suit perhaps?"

"I had a little business to see to in England," answered the Earl carelessly.

"Ha, ha—yes! Business is an unmanageable thing, my lord. It will interfere even with the pleasure of earls. May I trouble you to come this way, my lord? And perhaps when our consultation is over you would honor us by taking a cup of tea in the verandah—the evenings now are so balmy!"

There was not a trace now of Mr. Devon's recent indisposition or confusion; he was quite himself, and apparently in his usual spirits. When the two men had disappeared together, there was a chorus from Mrs. Devon, Nell and Grace—

"Oh, Ethel—how could you have been so fearfully rude?"

"Rude? It was Lord Eynesford who was rude! I shall not soon forget the way he spoke to me in the churchyard to-day."

It was very late before the gentleman rejoined them. The Earl looked grimmer than ever, and his agent appeared anxious and troubled.

"Thanks—I can't stay a minute," said the Earl, receiving his cup from the blushing and smiling Grace, probably without the least idea who was giving it to him.

Ethel sat apart, behind the others, nursing a kitten.

"I see the Conservatives have been successful in North Muddlesham, my lord," said Devon, taking up a newspaper.

"Ah—glad to hear it! Who's the man?"

"Lord Silcote—in by a majority of nine hundred."

"What a pity!" remarked Ethel, suddenly.

"Ethel!" exclaimed her mother.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Ethel—did you say 'what a pity?'" asked the Earl.

"Yes, I did."

"Why, may I ask?"

"What in the world can lords and people of that kind who have never known want, who have all the laws made to suit them—what can they know of the wants of the poor? Why should peasants have a lord to rule them?"

"Putting aside the many other aspects of the question, is it not possible that a landlord, a man who owns half the constituency, might know the wants and wishes of his tenants as well as most people?"

"Oh, yes—particularly if he visits his constituency once in five years, and spends most of his time in Arabia!"

It was a rude speech; Ethel felt it to be so as soon as it was spoken; but she was determined to stand by it, now that it was made, and, raising her eyes, she looked full at him. His answer was so gentle that it astonished her.

"Because I am a bad landlord, Miss Ethel, please don't judge all others by my standard; that would be punishing me too severely. I assure you some nobleman do their duty; and there may be more reasons than you know of for my apparent neglect of mine."

The color rushed to Ethel's face.

"I was very rude, and I beg your pardon," she said in her frank impulsive way.

"Good evening!" shouted a bright voice at this distressing moment, and up the path from the wicket-gate came Hector Fitzwarrene.

The Earl was standing in the shadow, and Fitzwarrene did not see him at first; but when he did there was a startled look of recognition, and Ethel did not fail to notice the expression of disgust upon her lover's face.

"Eynesford! The last man I expected to meet here!"

"Please don't add, the last man you wished to meet. I've been crushed once already to-night; please don't repeat the operation!"

They shook hands, but with a want of cordiality which was obvious. Fitzwarrene drew his chair to Ethel's side, and soon they were conversing together, to the exclusion of every one else. In about ten minutes Lord Eynesford abruptly took his leave, and a sigh of relief went around the circle.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

OF PERSPIRATION.—The human body is made up for the most part of water. A man weighing 154 pounds contains about 110 pounds of water, and only forty-four pounds of dry matter. Water is, therefore, vitally necessary to all human existence, and is supplied in all kinds of food, as well as with liquids, and also in the atmosphere that we breathe. It is constantly being thrown off from the body, and forms a very important agent in removing decayed matter from the system by means of the kidneys, by the lungs, and through the skin.

The amount of water daily evaporated by lungs and skin, in a healthy condition of the system, is equal to about one-third of the weight of the whole food, solid and liquid, which is taken into the stomach. The skin of a full-grown man, therefore, exhales in twenty-four hours, in ordinary circumstances, from one and a half to two pounds of water in insensible perspiration. When, in hot weather, or in undergoing violent exertion the perspiration becomes sensible, and instead of exhaling in a gentle moisture is thrown off in large drops of water, a much greater weight is disposed of in this way.

The action of this exhalation takes place through the glands. These glands are cylindrical tubes, arranged in the form of a globular coil situated in the connective tissue immediately under the third and inner layer of the skin. From each gland a small duct passes upwards through the layers of the skin, and terminates in a very minute and oblique opening on the surface.

The folds of the perspiratory gland are surrounded by a close network of capillary blood vessels, from which the watery and salt ingredients of the perspiration are exuded into the tube, and by capillary attraction are drawn to the surface and thrown off.

It does not seem so strange that the human body can throw of nearly two pints of water daily, so gradually and so gently that it is not felt as moisture, when we remember how many glands there are, and how very small each atom of moisture must be. On the back, the thighs, and legs there are about 500 perspiratory glands to the square inch of skin; on the breast, the forehead, neck, forearm and back of the hand and foot, about 1,000 to the square inch; and on the sole of the foot and palm of the hand, 2,700 in the same space. It is estimated that the number of perspiratory glands over the whole body is not less than 2,300,000, and as each tubular coil when unravelled is about one-fifteenth of an inch in length, the entire extent of tubing used to throw off the perspiration is not less than 153,000 inches, or nearly two miles and a half. A certain portion of the decayed matter of the body is thrown off through the perspiration, but the principal office of this exhalation is to regulate the temperature of the body. When the body is kept in a state of cleanliness and health, so that the circulation is regular and the perspiratory glands are always evenly but seldom abnormally active exposure to severe cold can be safely borne. When undue exertion brings out a greater flow of perspiration than can be readily and quickly removed by evaporation, the moisture chills the skin surface, the little mouths of the perspiration tubes contract, and there is what we call a checking of the perspiration, which immediately produces a sensation of chilliness. We have taken cold.

Bric-a-Brac.

A KING SHOCKED.—It is a remarkable instance of the kingly pride in which Louis XIV. of France, had been nurtured, and of the difficulty he found in comprehending the barest rudiments of religion, that Madame de Maintenon states that he was shocked to be told that Jesus Christ spoke the language of the humble and poor.

THE CORONATION ORB.—When a king (or queen) is being crowned he holds in his right hand a round globe with a cross on the top of it. This is called a mound. It is supposed to have a symbolical meaning, the ball representing the world (or the temporal power) and the cross the church (or the spiritual power). And the cross stands on the top of the orb to show that the former is the superior power. In this sense it is said to have been first used by the Emperor Justinian the Great, who died in A. D. 565. For the same reason Christ has been represented in some paintings as holding in His hand the mound, or symbol of empire.

EXTRAVAGANCE IN DRESS.—Shameful extravagance in dress is an old folly. In the reign of Richard II. dress was sumptuous beyond relief. Sir John Arundel had a change of no fewer than fifty-two suits of cloth of gold tissue. The prelates indulged in all the ostentatious luxury of dress. Chaucer says they had "chaunge of clothing everie dale." Brantome records of Elizabeth, Queen of Philip II. of Spain, that she never wore a gown twice; this was told him by her majesty's own tailor, who, from a poor man, soon became as rich as anyone he knew. Queen Elizabeth of England left no fewer than three thousand different habits in her wardrobe when she died.

FORTUNE-TELLING.—In 1570, the passions for horoscopes and expounding the stars, prevailed in France among the first rank. The new-born child was usually presented naked to the astrologer, who read the first lineaments in its forehead, and the transverse lines in its hand, and thence wrote down its future destiny. Will it be credited that one of these magicians having assured Charles IX. that he would live as many days as he should turn about on his heels in an hour, standing on one leg, that his majesty every morning performed that solemn exercise for an hour. The principal officers of the court, the judges, the chancellors, and generals, likewise, in compliment, standing on one leg and turning round!

SWALLOWS.—Swallows in old times were sacred to the Penates, or household gods, of the ancients, and their preservation became, therefore a matter of religious concern. Hence arose the superstition that whoever destroys a swallow, or her nest, destroys his or her fortune in doing so. Where the swallow nestles, it is said no lightning will fall; while the place she deserts is taken possession of by death. Whoever gives the swallow shelter will be thrice blessed. Formerly it was believed that the swallow did not migrate, but formed itself into a ball, and so passed under the sea or through the sea. Russian peasants believe that the swallow arrives from Paradise to warm the earth; that its presence keeps off fire and lightning.

MONKEY TRICKS.—A friend, whose farm adjoins mine, says a writer from the East Indies, had a litter of pigs in a sty raised upon posts, to secure it from the attacks of jackals and foxes, but it was not out of the reach of monkeys. Hearing an unusually loud and uproarious commotion in this elevated habitation of little grunters, we hastened to ascertain the cause, and found that a monkey had seated himself astride the mother, and, with one of her ears firmly grasped in each hand, was riding in fine style around the sty. The servants shouted, and he made his retreat, but not without taking with him one of the offspring of his nag. Holding it by the hind legs, he mounted to the top of a tall cocoanut tree, and then very deliberately placed his prisoner under his arm, and began to turn its tail round and round, as music-grinders turn the handle of the hand-organ; and at every turn this living instrument sent forth loud and piercing notes, which were responded to in various tones from the sty. The servants began to pelt him with stones, which caused him to leap from tree to tree; but finding himself embarrassed by the weight he carried, he threw the pig into the air, and, as it fell fifty or sixty feet, it was instantly killed.

No preacher is listened to but time, which gives us the same train and turn of thought elder people have tried in vain to put into our heads before.

AN HOUR OF DREAMS.

BY SUSANNA J.

A quiet hour of vague delicious dreaming,
A trance-like yielding to magnetic pow'r,
And all Life's truth and all its empty seeming
Were shown within that hour.

The voice of music charmed the soul within me
To passionate delight; but, as I fain
Would grasp the treasure as it came to win me,
The gladness changed to pain—

The sense of loss, the deep humiliation
Of one who knows that he hath fallen far
From that ideal whose best interpretation
Our daily actions are.

And, as I wakened from that wondrous vision,
It was as if my spirit had been led
Through paths enchanted, glorious, Elysian,
Wherein the angels tread.

But, oh, how hard, how bitter the returning
To cold realities of common day—
From summer's lavish wealth and ardent burning
To Winter dead and gray!

It left me lonely, longing, and out-reaching
To share the glory that brief vision wore,
O strange dim hour, the mysteries of thy teaching
Will haunt me evermore!

IN SEVERED PATHS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "WITH THIS RING I WED THEE," ETC.

[For the benefit of new subscribers, we give the following as the main facts of "Severed Paths" so far as published. There is a tradition in the Carbonelle family, handed down for centuries, that a disaster to one of its members is always presaged by the arrival at their home of a strange horseman. Harold Oliver, the lover of Estrild Carbonelle, knows nothing of this tale. Coming to visit her at Langarth, he meets on his way with a mysterious stranger. At Langarth he finds that Tristram Carbonelle, the brother of his sweetheart, and head of the house, has been shot by someone at sea. It is believed that smuggling is carried on at Langarth—the Carbonelle estate—and that the revenue officers are duplicated in Tristram's death. Captain Armstrong of the revenue service, knows the murderer, but says it happened through an accident, and refuses to divulge his name. Captain Armstrong with his vessel, is afterwards lost in a storm. Mr. Vicat, Estrild's uncle, becomes her guardian. She is removed to London. Harold also goes there and meets Mrs. Armstrong, the wife of the drowned Captain, and her daughter. The latter carries herself strangely towards him. This situation is complicated by the presence of a mysterious stranger at the same hotel. Harold desires to meet Estrild, but through the work of Mr. Vicat fails to do so. He hears from Michael and Daniel, old seamen from Langarth, that there is a person named Trevel, living in a low seaman's haunt of the city, who knows something of Tristram's death and its cause. They lay a plan to capture him, but are themselves taken by a press-gang, and carried on board one of the King's ships to be impressed as seaman. From this point the story is continued in the present number of THE POST.]

CHAPTER XXX—(CONTINUED.)

IT was a breezy morning; the sun shone brightly down from a blue sky on a blue sea, and the north wind which had cleared the air, and which was sending the gallant ship merrily down Channel, had also cleared men's minds of fog; so that never was a man in better temper than was Captain Pierson, of H.M.S. Vigilant, when the pressed men of the night before were brought before him.

There were some twenty-five men, besides Harold and his two companions, and these were disposed of in a summary and sufficiently good-humored way, the seamen themselves yielding to necessity in dogged silence.

They were brave men, and they fought for their country valiantly when called upon to give her their blood, though that country allowed them to be dragged from their homes, seized in the midst of the labor that gave their children bread, and ill-treated, ill-fed, and ill-paid, and discharged when wounded, to die or starve; yet they made England great, and, sweeping the seas with their stout arms, and dying for her with generous hearts, carried her empire round the length and breadth of the wide world.

At last, as these first pressed men retired, Daniel came to the front, and his stalwart frame and bronzed face caught the Captain's eye.

Daniel stated his case in few words, and claimed exception from impressment as a pilot, and commander and owner of his own boat.

His name being found in the list of pilots, his plea, after some slight demur, was allowed.

"Can you pilot us into Falmouth harbor?" asked the Captain quickly. "If so, you may as well stay on board till we get there."

"I can do that, sir."

"Very well then; stand aside—your case is settled."

"I hope you'll let me have my boy, sir; he is part of my crew, and I can't work my little ship without him."

"Put us into Falmouth safely, and we will talk about it," said the Captain, with the good-humor of the sunshine still in him.

"And the gentleman, sir—my friend, whom the press-gang had no right to seize, because he is a barrister, and has nothing of a sailor about him except his clothes, and they aren't his—they belong to my nephew Michael."

This speech, spoken quite seriously by Daniel, was received with a shout of laughter; and then, rather roughly, he was told to stand aside, and Harold was ordered to come forward.

Like the Irishman he was, he could not help seeing the ludicrous side of his position, although this did not turn him in the least from the gravity and determination of his purpose.

So, though a smile for a moment had glistened in his eyes, no trace of it was on the firm lips as Captain Pierson scanned his handsome face.

"Do you indorse the story of your friend, the pilot," he asked, in a bantering tone, "or will you take the King's shilling, and do your duty like a man?"

"I will accept the press-money," said Harold; "but I am no sailor. I can offer myself for hospital duty; and I suppose, in case of need, I can fight."

His clear enunciation, his cultivated voice, struck Captain Pierson's ear, causing him to scan his prisoner's appearance with a scrutinising look.

"Call the officer who executed the press-warrant," he said, in a sharp voice.

"Now, boatswain," he continued, as the man stood before him, "who is this person whom you impressed last night?"

"If you please, your honor, he is a deserter from the Billy-rough-un; and I had word of his whereabouts from the man you knows on—the crimp, sir."

"Never mind him—get on faster! I want to know who the man is."

"The deserter, sir; and he had a savage dog who has drowned the crimp—as I reported, sir, when I comed aboard; and he attacked the man in hospital as I hurt a bit, sir, when I shot the animal."

"Hurt a bit!" returned the Captain. "The man is dying—so the doctor tells me."

Harold felt himself grow pale; he clenched his left hand, and repressed the exclamation that rose to his lips.

Oh for one half-hour's liberty, to stand by Trevel's side, and hear what he had to tell!

"May I speak to you in private for one instant?" he said eagerly to Captain Pierson.

"Certainly not!" returned that gentleman, inflating himself with haughty amazement at such a request being preferred to him by a common seaman, who was, moreover, a deserter. "You have heard my warrant-officer's account of you, and you have not dared to deny the charge. The Hellerophon is at Plymouth; I shall put you aboard of her there, and you will be tried by court-martial, and most likely be hanged at the yard-arm as a deserter."

Hanging was at that time such a popular remedy for all crimes, misdemeanors, and mistakes, and the hanging of a wrong man an occurrence so common, that Harold felt he could scarcely afford to laugh at Captain Pierson's suggestion of his probable fate. He took a lawyer's course instead.

"I have a right to demand to see the warrant under which I am impressed," he said coolly. "Be good enough to show it to me," he added, in a voice of authority, turning to the boatswain.

That individual, taken aback by his coolness and his bearing, drew the document instantly from a greasy pocket-book, and handed it to him.

Harold, amid a momentary silence, examined it carefully, and then turned it over, and saw it had an indorsement on the back.

"'To be executed only by a commissioned officer,'" he read aloud. "And it was intrusted to a warrant-officer; my impressment therefore is illegal, and I demand ——"

"Confound your impudence!" exclaimed Captain Pierson, interrupting him in a rage. "Will you, a bad deserter, dare to stand before me quibbling like a lawyer?"

"It is because he is a lawyer, sir," broke in Daniel eagerly.

Captain Pierson glared at Daniel with a quarter-deck eye of command on hearing this, and then sharply ordered him to stand down and keep his own place in silence.

"Will you permit me," resumed Harold, keeping his cool ease still about him, "to say what my demand is?"

"The Navy is going to the dogs!" observed Captain Pierson quietly to an officer standing near him. "Fancy a fellow on my own quarter-deck speaking to me like that!"

"Do let us hear, sir, what he has to say," returned the other, whose eyes were full of suppressed laughter. "Perhaps he is going to ask to join our mess."

Harold overheard this without a smile—his thought was projected beyond this scene, and he felt as though it was a kind of dream which was to lead him into the reality of Trevel's presence and Trevel's confession of his crime.

"Hand that warrant back, and finish what you had to say!" cried Captain Pierson, in a peremptory voice.

"I wished to assure you, sir, with perfect truth, that the warrant of impressment has been illegally executed; therefore I demand to be received into his Majesty's service freely, and not as a pressed man. I do not ask to be allowed to leave the ship."

"You are a cool hand," said Captain Pierson, pressing his lips together in contemptuous anger; "and, if you think to escape a court-martial and hanging as a deserter by volunteering to serve on board the Vigilant, you are mistaken. Send a couple of marines here!" he added, turning to the officer near him. "I have had about enough of this."

Harold heard the order, but scarcely understood it till he found himself marching as a prisoner between two marines, who, without a word, conducted him to a dismal dark recess on the lower deck used as a prison, and popularly known as the "devil's oven" from its heat and propensity to stifle or burn men into fevers and death.

Three days of this den, as the ship ploughed her way onwards to Plymouth, sufficed to make Harold rave of green hills and fresh running streams and a high blue sky overhead in which a lark on poised wing sang to welcome him home.

From this dream he awoke with the sweat of pain and sickness on his brow, and, opening his dazed eyes in weary wonder, they alighted on the pale death-sharpened face of Trevel, swinging slowly in the hammock next to his in the ship's hospital.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"COME in!" said a strangely sweet voice in response to Estrild's question as to whether she might enter. "I have been expecting you all the afternoon. I am a sad invalid; do not be shocked when you see me."

Yet Estrild was shocked when her cousin rose from his arm-chair and came forward with trembling step to receive her.

His large dark eyes sunk within thick overhanging brows, his face pale to ghastliness, his white attenuated hand held out in greeting—all struck her with the pain ul idea of death in life.

In his presence she felt herself to be standing on the threshold between flesh and spirit, as though the touch of death, resting coldly on him, had half drawn aside the veil which wraps the soul and hides the impenetrable world of spirits from human ken.

"You are ill indeed!" she said pityingly, still holding his hand, and looking into his face with deep compassion in his eyes.

Then she saw a flush rise vividly to his thin cheeks, and he sank back on his chair with a little quiver on his lips, changing quickly to a forced smile.

"Please do not pity me!" he said, in a laughing tone. "I am weak enough not to like it—and I am really stronger than you would suppose. I can even drive out at times—on sunny days," he added, checking a sigh. "Now let me look at you; I want to see if your face is the same that I remember as a child's. Do you know, it is fifteen years since we last met; and you cannot recollect me?"

"Not in the least," said Estrild, shrinking a little from his fixed gaze.

"I have a picture of you which my mother drew when you were four years old—you are still like it;" and, rising, he opened an old brass-bound desk, and took from it a small portfolio, which he laid on the table before her. "Here is your portrait," he said—"and here is mine. Would you believe that was ever meant for me? Ah, health is happiness and beauty! But I had love, too, then—my mother was living."

"How long have you been ill?" Estrild asked hurriedly, repenting of her question as soon as asked; for she saw the flush rise again upon his face.

"Ever since I—I found myself alone in the world. My ill-health arose first from a blow."

Estrild raised her eyes and met his—they had changed to living flames; his thin hands, clenched, rested on the table, which trembled beneath their nervous, passionate pressure.

"You see, if hatred grows out of such things, one cannot help it," he said, in a voice which vibrated in the ear like a note struck by a soul in agony.

"I am very sorry——" Estrild began.

"Oh, don't be sorry for me! I am quite happy, now I know the worst. And, you see, I have made my prison very pretty and comfortable;" and he looked around with a sad smile on his books and paintings.

"Have you been here long, in this room, in such terrible loneliness?"

"Oh, no—not very long—only about two years."

"Only two years!" she repeated. "When I was ill at Salisbury, two weeks appeared a long, weary time."

"You were in great danger then," said her cousin, looking at her strangely as he spoke. "I feared for your life."

"I was not so seriously ill as that, I assure you," she answered, her color deepening; for her heart with a bound carried her thoughts to Harold, and to that madness of grief in her which had made her cruel.

"Why did you fly away?" said Gilbert, putting his hand on his forehead. "I was going to tell you something; now it is gone."

"Well, I am come back," returned Estrild, trying to smile, though her wistful eyes were gathering tears. "I fear it is your memory that floats away."

"No, it is not that; I have a powerful memory—a vindictive memory; but, when I am talking to people, if their thoughts leave me I follow them; I go where they go."

"My thoughts rushed down to Salisbury just now."

"Oh, I did not know the place, but I felt the sorrow of it; I heard a chord of music floating through darkness, and I saw the face that you saw."

Startled by his words, Estrild drew back slightly flushed and trembling.

"Carrie has been talking to you about me," she said, in a hurt tone.

"Oh, no; Carrie has her own brothers and sisters to think of—she does not often talk to me. I frighten her—she does not like me."

"Then I suppose Mrs. Vicat told you of my illness, and has given you my history as far as she knows it?"

"Yes; but there are things she cannot tell me—things I know of myself, not existing in her lore. Sickness, loneliness, and fasting bring visions with them."

He leaned back in his chair as if lost in thought; and Estrild, glancing at his death-white face, his pale hands, his attenuated frame, scarcely deemed him for the moment earthly.

Again the idea struck her that he stood upon the threshold between flesh and spirit, and had stood thus so long that he had gained power to look within the gate and see the unutterable, the formless, for which the tongue has no language, the eye no shape.

Once more she shrank farther from him, with a coldness creeping over her flesh, and a stronger love of life—this dear human life—bounding at her heart.

He looked up suddenly, with a wistful smile on his poor white face.

"Don't let me frighten you," he said, with a sort of sad eagerness. "Terror is repelling. I frighten Carrie: so she scarcely ever comes near me. But you and I are akin—we shall be friends, I hope."

"I hope so, too," Estrild answered; but the chill was still on her nerves while she spoke.

"We ought to care a little for each other, being cousins," he continued, sighing as he spoke, and fixing his eyes on her in a sorrowful, searching gaze.

"Yes, we ought—we are such near relations," Estrild assented uneasily.

"And we stand alone in the world," he said, "and save each others' lives."

"What do you mean? I can't see how we do that," she returned.

"Can't you see that, if one dies, the other, being the last of our race, will be attacked fiercely by the enemy? So that one of us two, who dies first, will sign the death-warrant of the other."

"I hope not," she answered, trying to speak playfully. "I think you should not harbor such strange gloomy fancies."

"It is not all fancy—there is a vein of truth in it. And, though it is not all of this world, neither is it all of the next. The man who kills us is a man; he is not a spirit unclothed by flesh. The thing is a mystery I have wasted my life in trying to fathom."

Estrild had grown very pale.

"Perhaps it is a mystery best left untouched," she said with quiet sadness. "I dread to hear it spoken of. It is such a little while ago since Tristram died, as we all die, by a sudden inexplicable accident. A man? Oh, no—no man on earth could haunt us with such vindictive hatred!"

"He may have no hatred—he may simply be compelled to work out another's vengeance. The man may be sorrowful beyond all human sorrow because led by a spirit that possesses and impels him against his will."

"That is a dreadful theory!" said Estrild, turning hastily away from the pale face with its unearthly glow, the eyes unnaturally bright, shining as though lighted by some lamp from within, which added tenfold strength to the words her cousin uttered.

"It is the only theory which will account for all that has happened," she answered, in eager excitement. "I have thought over it for years, and I have come at last to that conclusion."

"It is an impossible conclusion," insisted Estrild. "Does a man live for hundreds of years?"

"No; but a race does—a family lives and inherits the life and the curse of its progenitor. Even a disease in that ancestor's veins lives on for hundreds of years—why then not his passions? And, if his malady can fasten on the blood of his descendant, why should not his evil spirit fasten on his heart, and impel him to deeds he hates?"

"If you carried out that idea to its full end, we should not be free agents, and it would make one spirit, and one only, answerable for the sins of the whole world. We all descend from one common ancestor."

"Well, I will not say that one spirit is not answerable for the sins of the world, but I do not call that spirit Adam. I go further back into immeasurable realms that thought cannot pierce," he answered sternly.

"I will not try to follow you," said Estrild shrinkingly. "The evil of this world saddens me enough; to think of it as rushing on us through unfathomable time, and rushing onwards through eternity to blast other worlds, would fill me with fear and horror."

"Let us come back to ourselves—the two units in the worlds that interest us most," said her cousin, recalling his gaze from its far-away look. "Here, in my loneliness, shut out from all human ties and hopes, I have tried to fling my soul forward into the future beyond the flesh; but it holds me still, and you cannot think how I long at times for the touch of a hand, the sound of a voice, the warmth of some dear human comfort, that would call me back in a moment from all my cold visions of spirits that bring no consolation."

These words touched Estrild with pity; she drew nearer to him, and laid her hand kindly on his shoulder.

"You will not be so lonely now I am here," she said.

"Will you bear with me?" he asked eagerly. "Will you come here sometimes, if only for a minute in the day? You cannot imagine the sadness of solitary confinement, or the solace of speech to one shut up in silence as I am."

"I will come often—until you tell me I trouble you."

"I shall never tell you that. It is not only that I have been lonely through sickness," he continued, "but through difference of race and blood. I am an alien here, and so I have to suffer hatred, and feel that

all my efforts to win love only bring fear or contempt."

"But that is not the case now. You and I are of the same race—we can sympathise with each other."

He looked up, with eagerness and pleasure shining in his dove-bright eyes; but in a moment his head drooped again.

"It is so strange to hear words of kindness," he murmured. "But it will not last—you will grow afraid of me as the others do."

Estrild's color changed.

"I hope not," she said softly.

She could say no more, for, even as she spoke, she was conscious of a repulsion, touched with fear, that ran coldly through her pity and that sympathy of race which she undoubtedly felt.

Perhaps it was this capability of comprehending him which gave her a kind of terror, as it enabled her to follow him to that border on which he dwelt, and from which she shrank in horror.

"You only hope it?" he said wistfully. "Well, I hope it too. Now let us talk of other things. Tell me how you like it here among my people."

"I like Carrie; and I think your stepmother has a kind heart."

"Yes, she has naturally; but without courage a kind heart is an empty egg-shell. Carrie is strong and good and vulgar, and I like her, though she often makes me feel as Job did when the 'hair of his flesh stood up.' You cannot stay among us long," he added suddenly. "Life would be unendurable to you in our atmosphere."

"I must stay, I suppose, until I am of age—unless I put myself in Chancery," she said, smiling.

"Doing that would waste your substance and your life too. You can marry before you are of age, and escape that way."

"I think not," said Estrild, as a bright color flew to her face, then faded as quickly as it came. "There are many hindrances to that. Mr. Vicat is my guardian, and would not consent to my marrying any one but a person of his own choosing."

"And you know, I suppose, that he has made a choice?"

Estrild looked up with quick fear.

"No; he cannot have dared to do such a thing!"

"Oh, yes! He has selected a husband for you, who, as he thinks, would further his own ends by dying and leaving him to inherit your wealth."

Estrild glanced in dismay at her cousin. He was leaning back in his chair, his eyes partly closed, his face expressive of intense bitterness and pain.

Suddenly he looked up and caught her gaze, and gave her a sad smile.

"Do not let it make any difference between us—do not let it part us, or take from me a single word of kindness of yours. Why should you play into his cruel hands? You know he is trying to kill me. He is my heir."

Estrild listened, but could not speak—a sick fear was clutching at her heart. And it was dreadful to see a son believing so intensely in the greed of his father—the more dreadful to her because of the love and trust which had been the very roots of her own life.

"I ought not to have told you of this mad wicked scheme," continued Gilbert, in a pained voice—"it will make you hate me all the sooner."

"Surely I shall never hate you!" she answered hesitatingly. "Why imagine such a sad thing?"

"You don't know me yet—you do not understand all my weakness. To be in the grasp of a tyrant for years does not strengthen the nerves, and he knows his power—he knows what he can make me do. If you saw me act under his influence, you would hate me—you would have cause," he concluded bitterly.

"But you are not leaning yourself to his schemes?" exclaimed Estrild hastily. "And you are aware that I am engaged to Mr. Oliver?"

"Do not wrong me," he pleaded, with pathetic sadness. "I am thinking of death, not marriage. And I am not ignorant of your love for Mr. Oliver, or of your promise to your brother. Pleasance told me. She writes to me sometimes; her letters come to me like little winged messengers from heaven. Do you know I could help you, if you would let me?"

He spoke eagerly, as if anxious to efface from her mind the painful impression made by his confession of Mr. Vicat's plans.

"In what way could you help me?" asked Estrild. "I should not ask you to stand by me in any dispute between me and Mr. Vicat; you are not strong enough for warfare."

"True, I should make a poor defender in battle against him; but there are other ways, other means——"

He hesitated, then stopped, his eyes fixed inquiringly on her, as though seeking to read encouragement in her face.

Something in his expression, she could not define what, made her answer so strangely.

"Lawful means, I hope," she said—"not anything unearthly?"

"On this earth how can anything be unearthly? Whatever power is here in the world it must be lawful to use—if used well," he added. "The very fact of its existence on the earth makes it earthly, though it may be mysterious and not understood. Don't you see that? Let me show you what I mean."

He rose eagerly, and took from an inlaid cabinet a crystal, which he held towards her.

"The art of divining by crystals, or rather the power of seeing the visions of the mind reflected in a crystal, is a very ancient one," he said. "Are you afraid to look? You must let me hold your hand the while."

"I am not afraid; but I think it a folly—one of the delusive tricks of Eastern conjurers."

He paid no heed to this remark. He placed the crystal in her right hand, while he grasped the left tightly in his own right.

"Now concentrate all your power of thought on the person you most wish to see, and a vision of him will rise in the crystal."

Estrild, half curious, half fearful, and wholly full of love and anxiety for Harold, thought of him with all her strength; but the crystal remained dull, as though a cloud covered it.

"What do you see?" asked her cousin. His voice sounded strangely, as though floating to her from a distance.

"I see nothing," she answered very faintly; "but I hear the rushing of water."

And now she was conscious that, without relinquishing her hand, he had placed her in a chair, from which she had no power to move, while, stretching out his arm, he took another crystal from the cabinet, which he put, as he had the first, in her right hand.

Leaning forward, he pressed his lips on this hand with full warm strength, and, though she felt her heart beat very angrily, she had neither wish nor will to resist him.

The next moment she was standing up, as she thought, in a dark place alone, except for the clasp of a hand whose grasp she felt through all her veins in a thrill of pain which yet was not pain, but like a little breath of fire which did not burn.

"Where am I?" she tried to say, but found she had no voice.

The rush of waves sounded deeper and deeper around her, then a speck of light touched the crystal and spread on it, and with dilated eyes she saw Harold leaning over the hammock of a sick and dying man.

Voices fainter than the whisper of summer leaves seemed to issue from the vision, yet the words touched her ear very distinctly.

"Speak the truth, as you hope for—for mercy."

"I have spoken it. As truly as I am a dying man, I swear it was an accident. Just as that unearthly whistle rang through the air the pistol——"

The clasp of the hand holding her in the darkness relaxed, the breath of fire changed to a cold wind, the fingers let go their grasp of hers; she was standing again in the dim light of her cousin's room, and he had fallen to the floor in a dead faint.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ESTRILD stood for a moment dazed and bewildered, incapable of thought, scarcely understanding where she was then, recovering herself, she sprang to the door and called for help.

Her cries brought Carrie to her aid. She knelt down by her brother's side and chafed his hands—not with her usual self-possession, but in a flurried and scared way, and with her face growing nearly as white as his.

"He always frightens me," she said, in an awed tone. "I hate to come near him! What has he been doing to bring on this?"

Estrild was silent; her thoughts were too confused for her to give a clear answer to this question—so she let it pass.

To her surprise it was Gilbert himself who replied—

"Oh, nothing, Carrie! It was only a little faintness; and I am better now, thank you."

"I am glad to hear it," returned Carrie, in rather a sharp voice; "and I think, knowing how weak you are, you should not try any of those absurd experiments you are so fond of. I can see you have scared Estrild nearly out of her wits."

She looked from one to the other with a suspicious glance full of fear; then she took Estrild's hand, and drew her towards the door.

"Are you going?" asked Gilbert wistfully, his large eyes fixed on them with the gaze of a child who dreads to be left alone.

He had risen during Carrie's speech, and, aided by her arm, had gained his couch, on which he lay back still faint and weak.

"I will stay with you if you wish it," said Estrild.

"He does not wish it," interposed Carrie sharply. "Tell her so, Gilbert—tell her you are best left alone after these attacks."

"Yes, that is true," he answered, with a deep sigh. "You had better leave me, Estrild."

Carrie did not wait for another word; she drew Estrild away and closed the door.

"I would never let you go in there again if I had my way," she said, as she almost dragged Estrild down the stairs. "I was foolish enough once to listen to him, till I got very ill as a warning; then—then I stopped."

"A warning?" queried Estrild.

"Yes; a warning that one must not meddle with the next world while one lives in this one."

Estrild felt that she could not argue the question; she was still too bewildered to think clearly, and the haze resting on her mind seemed to cover also the vision she had seen; so that she had no fear regarding it—no sufficient belief in it to cause her anxiety or dread.

In the same dazed way she listened mechanically to Carrie's words without their having any effect or influence on her.

"It was Tom who saved me," continued Carrie. "Thank goodness, he is the very incarnation of common sense! It is by his wish that I see Gilbert as seldom as possible."

"But that is not kind," said Estrild.

They were in the little back-parlor now, and Carrie turned and stared at her.

"Kind!" she repeated. "There is not a word in the English language so misused as that. Would it be kind to the others to allow myself to be driven out of my senses? A nice mill-stone I should be round mother's neck then, instead of being a help to her! And would it be kind to Tom?"

"I don't know," returned Estrild; "you bewilder me a little."

"That's because you have just had your senses drawn out of you by one of Gilbert's wizard tricks, and so you can't see things in a right light."

"Was it a trick?" asked Estrild, rousing herself from the strange torpor into which she had fallen.

"Ah, I was certain he had played the wizard, and taken you in before your own eyes!" exclaimed Carrie. "I know it by your dazed look. The whole thing is a delusion—mind that; so don't be persuaded out of your senses. Oh, here's Tom! Now you shall hear his opinion of Gilbert's magic."

The young man, whom Carrie now introduced as Mr. Ashleigh, had a bright honest face, a small figure, and a brisk manner which was pleasant, though slightly too free and easy.

The introduction being over, he perched himself astride a music-stool, and scanned Carrie from head to foot with an admiring smile.

"That's a tip-top gown, Carrie, and you are looking first-rate! Now what's the question before the present Parliament? Weren't you discussing something like a pair of big-wigs when I came in?"

Estrild was silent; such odd familiarity, such queer manners, were new to her. Carrie's sweetheart appeared to her as an odiously vulgar person with a peculiar phraseology of his own.

"We were talking of Gilbert," said Carrie.

"Oh, poor fellow, he is perfectly cracked, and I believe he can peep and pry into the middle of next year and the business of the next world! In my opinion such things are best left alone; our work in this world is as much as we can manage."

"I do not consider my cousin in the least crazed," returned Estrild not coldly. "You must remember that we are all built on the same plan."

"Quite true, miss. One fellow can go down the crater of Mount Vesuvius and peep at the eternal fires; another fellow, if he tried it, would be scorched up. Now, Carrie, pop on your bonnet, or we shall lose the tuning-up of the fiddles. It is a weakness of mine to be in good time for everything."

Carrie, in prompt obedience, quitted the room; and then her lover, with quite another manner, turned to Estrild.

"For her sake I always speak of her brother's strange powers in a jesting way," he said. "Pray excuse it, Miss Carbonelli. I assure you it is a necessity to make her think lightly of them. At one time he had great influence over her, with the result to her of ruined health. She was sleepless, and was always seeing ghosts; she is not the sort of person who can descend craters and stand the smell of sulphur."

"But surely my cousin's power—if he possesses occult power, as you suppose—is not an evil one?" expostulated Estrild anxiously.

"It is evil when it does harm, which it certainly did to Carrie."

"It would not hurt me," Estrild answered.

He looked at her with a pair of searching light-blue eyes.

They were insignificant eyes apparently, with overhanging lids and light brows, but they were eyes that saw clearly and had honest truth in them.

"I think you are mistaken in yourself," he rejoined. "I should imagine that you were peculiarly sensitive to such influences. And is there not some story or tradition in your family which makes it the more dangerous for you to tread on forbidden ground, because it might strengthen the—the gloomy faith you have in misfortune?"

"You needn't have hesitated over my sad belief in the fate that befalls us," said Estrild. "Our history proves that I have cause enough for my gloomy faith."

"I have heard the story," resumed Tom, "and I don't pretend to understand it. But, if I were in your place, I would never think of it at all, or allow it to influence my life. I must tell Carrie to introduce you to my little friend Mary Armstrong. She is a perfect antidote against unhealthy thoughts; she did Carrie a world of good."

"Armstrong! Is she related to Captain Armstrong who was drowned the other day?"

"She is his daughter and only child, and the queerest, quaintest little creature—one moment a baby, and the next a woman—and——"

"I have no wish to make her acquaintance, thank you!" interrupted Estrild. "It would be too painful—my brother met his death on the deck of his father's ship."

"Yes; I am sorry I had forgotten that. But she would do you good if you could bear to see her—not now, but when she returns to London; she is away at present. Miss Carbonelli, I have something to tell you, and I have tried to talk away my unwillingness to speak because—well, because I fear it is bad news."

"What is it?" asked Estrild, in sharp fear. "You must tell it now."

"Perhaps there is no cause for alarm; but at Mr. Oliver's chambers they are getting anxious about him. He has written or sent no news of himself since the night he left so suddenly, when he wrote those few words which I brought to you."

"He said he should be away a few days. How long is it now?" she said, pressing her hand on her forehead.

"Ten days, I think," said Tom. "And this morning, having a holiday, I thought I couldn't do better than gather all the particulars I could for you."

"Yes—you are very kind;" and Estrild looked at him vaguely, not seeing his frank face, seeing only again, as in the crystal, Harold's figure, white and worn, stooping over a dying man.

"And so I have found out that Mr. Oliver quitted his room with a sea-faring man, and they both got into a boat waiting for them at the Temple stairs, and rowed to a barque in the river—or it might be a brig—at all events, it was named the Curlew, and it has gone to sea. This was all I could discover; and it took time, I assure you, to drag the information out of the mouths of stupid witnesses."

"Gone to sea?" repeated Estrild; and again there floated dimly before her the vision in the crystal.

"Well, the Curlew is gone to sea," said Mr. Ashleigh, as if anxious to speak with the utmost correctness. "Do you know anything of her?"

"Oh, yes!—and I know her owner and captain, Daniel Pascoe."

"Then in that case," continued Tom, quite relieved, "I presume there is no cause for anxiety."

"No—I think not; only I cannot imagine why Harold should go back to Cornwall, or why Daniel should come to London, unless"—and her face flushed as with sudden pain—"they have received information which has sent them again on a wild quest."

"But in that case would not Mr. Oliver have written to you?"

Estrild clasped her hands tightly together, and strained her eyes as if beholding some inward vision before she answered.

"No; I have no right to hope for a letter. My brother's death has parted me from Mr. Oliver."

"Do you mean you have broken off your engagement with him?" asked practical Tom Ashleigh, in astonishment.

"Yes—I mean that. I promised my brother that if the old mystery that pursues us was connected with his death I would never marry."

She broke down suddenly here, not weeping, but covering her face with her hands, as though to shut from her eyes some dreadful sight.

Tom was silent for a moment, partly in pity, partly in wonder, such thoughts and feelings being so strange to him, living his life in all the realism of London, whose thronged streets have no place for the ghosts of the dead.

Then too gropingly his mind was seizing the truth—that, in the hope to release her from the burden of her promise, Harold had flung himself into some wild adventure.

"Yours is a promise that cannot be kept," said Tom, with quiet firmness. "I hope the letter which I left at Mr. Oliver's chambers was to recall him."

The slender hands still covering her face could not hide the warm flush that rose to it now as she said "Yes," in a voice scarcely audible.

Then, having spoken, her hands fell, and she looked up, with a quick fear springing to her eyes.

"Oh, Mr. Ashleigh, it was a solemn promise—an earnest, dreadful promise; and I have done wrong to break it in spirit! You see, Fate has stepped in to prevent me from breaking it in reality. Harold has not received my recall—will never receive it now. Mr. Ashleigh, you must fetch back that letter."

"I'll be hanged if I do!" said Tom, slapping the top of his hat, which rested on his knee, with a broad hand. "A thing done can't be undone; the letter will stop where it is. And I trust Mr. Oliver will read it before the world is a week older. Oh, here you are at last, Carrie! And I hope you are ashamed of yourself for having taken about an hour to put your bonnet on. If it took me as long to ram my hat on my head as it does a woman to fix a flimsy bit of ribbon and gauze on hers, I'd go bareheaded all my life."

"Don't talk, Tom; my bonnet is good substantial straw, and I have not taken a minute to put it on. I have been dressing mother, and mending all her hooks and-eyes. Somehow she is always like the kings of Israel in grief—she is constantly rending her garments."

"You are a little humbug—full of excuses!" retorted Tom, putting his arm around her affectionately, utterly regardless of the bad taste of the proceeding in Estrild's presence. "And now, if there is nobody else to mend, I suppose we may start at once."

A minute or two more of noise, bustle, and laughter, and Estrild was left alone in the dead dusty silence of the London back-parlor.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

INTIMATE FRIEND:—Have you been enjoying your honeymoon at Old Point Comfort? Heiress (lately married)—Yes, we've been there; but, do you know, I overheard Tom tell a friend of his it was 'harvest-moon' with him instead of honeymoon." What do you suppose he meant? Funny, wasn't it?" Friend (knowingly)—Oh, yes, very—for Tom.

TO MY LAMP.

BY WM. W. LONG.

Thou hast ever given me kindly light,
Through many long night hours,
While I wrote of love, beauty and hope,
And songs of birds and flowers.

Thy cheerful ray hath ever been
A true, true friend to me;
But Death some day will blow me out,
As now I blow out thee.

"ON TRIAL."

BY PHYLLIS.

CHAPTER I.

SHE was one of those girls who are perhaps more attractive than strictly pretty, because certainly her features had their faults.

Her skin, however, was like satin, creamy, delicious, with a little soft flush running through it; and over her low, broad brow her chestnut hair fell in a soft natural wave.

No maid had ever cut it; it was in fact "born so," and it blew from side to side as the wind listed, and was touched with gold here and there, and had indeed a good deal to do with her many conquests.

Her first season had pronounced her an undeniable success; which meant that to her brother, Lord Hartley, she became at once a decided anxiety.

She was never now without one, or rather two, young men dangling after her wherever she went, not only to balls and at homes in town, but to the Tyrol or the Highlands afterwards, and wherever the Hartleys might chance to go.

It was indeed Lady Hartley's private opinion that had they elected to go to Hudson's Bay for the winter, there these young men would have appeared up to time, and ready as ever to fall down and worship her sister-in-law.

And they weren't always the same two young men, either: that added to the grievance. Miss Charteris had many little ways, but the cleverest of all was the little way in which she used to get rid of a suitor when he grew importunate.

This cleverness was hardly appreciated by Lady Hartley, upon whom fell, as a rule, the task of consoling and smoothing down the discarded one.

She was thus compelled to think a good deal about Sophy, off and on, and just now she was particular about her, because she feared she was going to decline the best match of the year.

Lady Hartley was young herself, and was not without sympathy and affection for her sister-in-law, but she certainly thought her very foolish: and she didn't in the least know how to manage her.

She was a very nice woman, if a trifle plaintive and given to looking at the unwearable side of most things. She was a good woman too, intensely devoted to her nursery, as a good woman should be, but she was, perhaps, a trifle dull.

Just now she was worrying over two things: the baby's teething, which exercised her mind quite as much as though she had not seen three other babies get through the same obnoxious process, and her fear that Sophy would at the last refuse Lord Elston's hand—and very handsome rent roll.

She was divided between these two anxieties, when the door opened and Sophy herself entered the room.

"Anything the matter, Molly?" asked she, after a cursory glance at Lady Hartley's inexpressive features.

The latter had been christened a decorous Mary by an Archbishop, but Miss Charteris insisted on calling her Molly, which of course was a trial. She came across the room now with her usual light, swift step, and leant over the back of Lady Hartley's chair.

"Are the children all right?" she asked. "Baby's tooth through yet? You look as if someone had been giving you a severe scolding."

"I have very many things to worry me," said Lady Hartley, with a sigh. "And, of course, I cannot help feeling anxious about baby."

"That big, fat baby!" said Miss Charteris, laughing. "Dear Molly, how silly! It is merely teething—I hope—that induces him to give way to those wild fits of diabolical temper."

"Oh, no! He is not ill-tempered. He has the temper of a very angel," interrupted the mother, reproachfully. "It is all, I am convinced, the fault of that coral his grandmother sent him."

"Then why let him have it? Why not get him a proper ring? Edith never has any others. A thick, soft indiarubber ring. It is not pretty, but babies like it, which, of course, is everything."

"And how am I to get one in this out-of-the-way place?" returned Lady Hartley, helplessly.

"I'll write to George. He is coming down for these theatricals, you know, the day after to-morrow, and he shall bring it."

"George!" Lady Hartley repeated, regarding her anxiously. "Do you mean to tell me you write to George?"

"Now and then."

"After all that passed between you last spring? Do you think Lord Elston would like it, if he heard of it?"

"I don't know, so I can't say."

"Sophy!" said Lady Hartley, in a very solemn tone, "I do hope you are not going to do anything foolish with regard to Elston!"

"I hope not, indeed," said Miss Charteris, with a solemnity that put her sister's in the shade, but she rather spoiled it by laughing afterwards.

"It is distinctly wrong of you to encourage George. And you must know," waxing a little warm, "that even one line from you in his present frame of mind will be sufficient to waken all the old regret. Now, Sophy, tell me one thing, do you or do you not like Lord Elston?"

Miss Charteris employed herself for a moment or two in looking deeply into the fire. Then she said, with the most indifferent air in the world:

"I'm not sure."

"That terrible sentence!" cried Lady Hartley, impatiently; "I'm tired of it. Invent another, I beseech you. No, don't stand there. Come round here where I can see you. Do you know that chronic state of yours of being sure is causing you to be rather too freely discussed by your friends? And for a girl to be talked about—that, you will admit, is undesirable. And you know, too, that when people once begin to talk they never know where to stop."

"I do, indeed," returned Miss Charteris, with a comical glance at her.

"You mean that for me, of course. But I don't mind. I shall do my duty, whatever comes of it. And now, what fault do you see in Lord Elston?"

"He is too rich and too jealous."

"His jealousy proves his love. And if riches stand in his way, why, it is the first time I ever knew them regarded as an objection. And you should be the last to say that. You know you said last year you refused George because he was too poor."

"That only shows how I hate extremes. George is too poor; Lord Elston too rich."

"Nonsense. I begin to think you have still a secret kindness for George."

"I hope you are wrong. As, in spite of the passion you think he still entertains for me, I hear he has fallen a victim to the beaux yeux of that youngest Miss Wolverton. Ah! Molly, I fear my swains are not so faithful as yours were."

"I trust that what you tell me is true. If, indeed, you do not think of George, why can't you make up your mind to Elston?"

"I have told you. Never mind what I said about his money—if you will have my real reason—it is his jealous disposition that I dread. How could I expect happiness with a man who suspects me of—of all sorts of things the moment I am out of his sight?"

"Of flirting with other men, you mean. You cannot deny, Sophy, that you have given him cause.'

"Well, not for a long time now. Not lately; yet he is as suspicious as ever."

"Once married, that would be all at an end."

"So you think. No; I should be afraid to venture."

"Is that your only reason for hesitating?"

Miss Charteris blushed and then laughed lightly.

"You ask me a good deal," she said. "Well, even if I do confess to its being an only one, surely it is as strong as twenty smaller ones. There! I shan't submit to any further cross-examination. I shall go and give George directions about that ring."

She moved towards the door. Lady Hartley called after her.

"Don't be too hard on him," she said. "You know you wouldn't like it were he utterly devoid of jealousy. Give him a chance. Why not find some way of putting him on trial for a certain time, to test him?"

"But I know of no plan," returned Sophy carelessly.

As she crossed the hall, the door of the library opened and a young man came towards her. He was tall and well made and about twenty-nine.

He was dressed in tennis flannel and held a racket in his hand. He had a very dark, earnest eyes, and these lit up as he saw Miss Charteris.

"I was just going to look for you, Sophy. Come out, and let me give you a little beating."

"I like that!" said she, contemptuously. "Put it the other way round and I may be able to understand you. No, I can't go yet. I should like a game, but there is something I must do first."

"There always is," returned he, in an aggrieved tone. "As a rule I always come off second best with you."

"And quite right too," she laughed saucily.

"I wonder if you care for me at all?" said Elston, in a gloomy sort of way."

"Yes, I do," returned she, "sometimes."

"Which means that I annoy you 'sometimes.' Is that it? Why are you silent, Sophy? Tell me my sin."

"Would you really have me tell you?" asked she, gravely, lifting her eyes to his.

"I would, indeed."

"Why, then," said she, softly: "Beware, my lord, of jealousy."

"Jealous! You think me jealous!" exclaimed he. "Why, I believe I am the least jealous man on earth. Were it otherwise you——"

He stopped abruptly.

"Go on," said she, a little haughtily. "Were it otherwise you think I should give you food for it; but you forget that there is no reason why I should study your wishes. You have no claim on me."

This was a little cruel of her, but she was angry.

"I know that," he said, humbly. He regarded her with a very keen reproach. "Sophy! will you never give me that claim?"

"I tell you I should be afraid," said Miss Charteris, softened in a degree by that submissive glance, but still rather impatiently. "A jealous man is a terrible thing."

"I think you misjudge me. Of course, very naturally, I should like all your smiles to be my own, but I do not really believe I am the irrational creature you would portray me. Try me, Sophy. Give yourself to me and I do not think you will repent it."

He had taken her hand, and now, holding it fast, sought to read her eyes. But she kept them religiously lowered. Still she did not draw her hand away, and it was evident that she hesitated.

It even seemed to him, by the yielding of her lips, that she was almost on the point of speech that would declare her won, when suddenly she moved back from him and shook her charming head. There was a new light in her eyes as she looked up, as though she had come to some strange resolution.

"I shall put you on trial first," she said, gaily. Lady Hartley's last words, though still so fresh in her mind, were already bearing fruit. "Do not look so frightened," she went on, smiling. "Your probation shall not be too prolonged. Just one small week! If during those seven days you prove yourself three times unreasonably jealous of any act of mine, you——"

"Three times! Oh, absurd!" he said, hastily. "You cannot really imagine me so senseless as that."

"I am generous, you see," said she, calmly. "As you yourself admit, I give you a large margin. Perhaps," with a slight but charming blush, "I do not wish you to fail. Well!—No! Stay just there and listen. If you should chance to sin thus three times, you will give me your word to relinquish for ever all hope of—well, of—oh, you know!" she said. "On the other hand, if you do not sin twice, I for my part will promise to——"

"Yes, go on," entreated he, eagerly. "You will give yourself to me as my reward. Is that it?"

"Let it be so," said she, smiling prettily, whilst her blush deepened.

He bent over hands and kissed them with a fond and tender passion.

"I did not think this morning that midday would see me so happy a man," he said, with glad triumph, his dark eyes alight.

"Do not boast," said she, warningly. But she smiled as she warned, and he heeded only the smile.

"This is Thursday. This day week I shall envy no man."

She ran away from him, up two or three steps of the staircase, but his voice compelled her to stop.

"About ten minutes. If you don't mind waiting about for a bit, I'll join you then."

He did "wait about," for such a considerably longer "bit" than the ten minutes named, that he was a trifle restless and impatient when at last she did appear.

She tripped down as unconcernedly as possible, however, with a letter in her hand.

"Oh! it was that kept you," said he, casting a wrathful glance at the letter. "To whom were you writing?"

Miss Charteris raised her brows, and then looked amused.

"What a singularly rude question," she said.

He colored. "Was it rude? Why?"

"For the simple reason that I might not care to tell you."

"Why should you not care?"

To this she made no answer beyond a little swift glance as she moved towards the post bag that lay on a side table. By some accident her hand brushed against the heavy fronds of a very large fern, and the letter fell to the ground, address uppermost.

It was quite impossible that he could prevent himself from seeing it. The writing was singularly large and legible for a woman, and

The Hon. George Markham,
The Albany,
London,

was so clear that it might have been print of a good type. His face was as dark as night as he picked it up and returned it to Miss Charteris.

"It wasn't my fault," he said.

"Certainly not. It was my awkwardness. Still, as you know, it is an ill-wind that blows nobody good, and—you have had your curiosity gratified."

She was a little flushed as she spoke—a fact that Elston saw and dwelt upon.

"I have seen what I had no desire to see," he answered, stiffly.

"Well, why shouldn't I write to George?" she asked, a touch of defiance in her tone. "He is a very old friend."

She was a little put out by the whole affair.

"Why, indeed? I am bound, of course, to remember that he was first in the field."

"Oh! if you put it that way!" she said. She turned sharply away, and then as suddenly stopped. "I suppose," indignantly, "you think I ought to open that letter and show you the contents."

"I do," returned he, boldly.

"You suspect me, then?"

"I should certainly like to see what you have written to Markham. You call him an old friend, but you must acknowledge he was rather more than that to you a year ago."

"Not more to me—whatever I may have been to him."

She paused, and then throwing up her head, regarded him fixedly.

"You remember our compact of a while since?" she asked. "Such a little while. A bare half-hour, I think. You remember it?"

He pleaded perceptibly.

"Is this jealousy?" she said.

"You spoke of jealousy without reason. Am I now unreasonable? Have you proved me so?"

"Have you proved that you are not so? How do you know what this letter contains. There is such a thing as Time, that will prove which of us is right."

There was scorn in her glance as she looked at him and threw down her racket upon a hall chair.

"A week!" she said, bitterly. "I should have made it a day! Already—though but a few minutes have passed—you have transgressed once."

She cast one last reproachful glance at him, which betrayed the fact of her eyes being full of tears, and then left him.

Although totally unconvinced and inwardly raging against George Markham, fear of Sophy's displeasure had such a hold on Lord Elston, that he determined to subdue himself and give her no further cause for anger.

Whatever happened, whatever she might choose to do, he would be blind and deaf to it until this momentous week was at an end.

Once his, he thought, all would be right. During the evening, therefore, he so managed to conduct himself that Miss Charteris, outwardly at least, forgave him.

The next day brought an influx of visitors for the private theatricals impending, and in which Sophy was to bear a principal part.

Elston, having no talent that way, of course, shut out from the frequent rehearsals that, after the arrival of the last contingent, went on morning, noon and night.

He certainly objected to the absorption of Sophy's time, but he was still so careful to avoid a second offence, that he pretended a deep interest in the play, which scarcely was a thing of detestation to him.

Amongst the actors there was a tall, angular young man, with a glowing eye, a Roman nose and a tragic expression. This latter was perhaps born of a belief in his own histrionic powers, and the opinion of a few friends of his that he was the very image of Mr. Irving.

He was, at all events, the leading spirit of the theatricals that just then possessed the guests at Hartley Court.

His manner was impressive, and he had acquired a trick of taking people aside into corners and recesses, behind screens and palms, and there whispering to them in a solemn, earnest fashion that precluded the idea of frivolity.

By degrees it became noticeable that it was generally Miss Charteris who was drawn by him behind the Japanese screens and branching palms.

But as the mysterious conferences were presumably about the play in which she was to take the principal role, and as she seemed to bear up wonderfully under the infliction of these repeated interviews, no one felt called upon to go to her rescue. Lord Elston writhed beneath it all, yet made no sign.

For two whole days indeed he suffered torments, betraying no temper, and putting in rather mechanical smiles in the right places; but on the third day an event occurred that destroyed his newly-formed resolves to endure all things, rather than again show himself distrustful of his lady-love.

On the top of the small hill at the very end of the fruit garden, a glass house had been built that was specially dedicated to pelargoniums.

It was rather far from the house and, therefore, seldom visited by any people staying at Hartley; but Elston, who was fond of this particular flower, strolled up sometimes to look at them, although it was growing towards the end of July, and their first loveliness was almost at an end. It was the Monday following that eventful Thursday, on which Miss Charteris had put him on his trial, that he went up to the pelargonium house to try and while away the time until he could hope again to see Sophy.

Ever since these wretched amateurs had descended upon the house, she had been conspicuous by her absence from eleven to luncheon—studying her part in her own room, as Lord Elston fondly, if erroneously, believed.

At some distance from it, but on a line with the eastern end of the glass house, ran a hedge of laurel sufficiently thick to conceal the approach of any one coming from that side.

Elston, walking leisurely towards it, became all at once conscious that a voice—the voice indeed in all the world for him—was sounding somewhere near.

He looked through a large hole in the hedge and discovered that Miss Charteris was in the house, the door of which was open, and that she was not alone! The tragic young man was with her!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

"Does the masculine embrace both sexes?" is a question that has often been discussed. As for us, we have observed that the masculine embraces one sex much more than does the other.

MRS. NOUVEAU (to departing guest).—"Good-night, Mr. Augur. I had begun to think you had gone, and that we had missed the pleasure of saying good-bye to you."

The Unknown.

BY H. D.

YES, ma'am, we nurses do come across strange people, and some queer things happen to us when we are living about, and going to different places. But the funniest thing happened to me only the summer before last. Would you like to hear about it?

Well, ma'am, I had an engagement to go in the country to nurse a Mrs. Hay, where I had never been before, and did not know a soul.

I got a letter telling me when to come, and saying that someone would be at the station to meet me when the train arrived.

I left here early in the morning, and it was about nine o'clock when I reached Camden the same night. At this village I had to get off, but Mr. Hay (who was a minister) lived several miles' distance from the village, and I knew I would have to drive out to his house.

Only three other passengers stopped at this station, and they soon went away, and there I was left waiting on the platform, hoping to hear someone ask for me; but I heard no one, nor did I see any kind of vehicle near, though it was, I do think, the darkest night I ever remember; so I just stood there quietly.

At last the station-master came and asked where I was going. I told him, and that I expected someone would have been to meet me.

He went to the end of the platform, and I heard him call out, "Anybody here from Mr. Hay?"

There was no answer, and he came back and told me I had better wait where I was; they might come directly; but the waiting-room had to be closed, as no other train came in that night, and he was going home.

I did not know what to do. I asked if there was a cart, or anything that could carry me away; but none at that time could be had, or rather there was no one interested enough to exert himself to help me.

The "fly," the man told me, had not come to the train that night, it was not always worth while, so few passengers stopped there.

So I just sat down on my trunk on the platform.

I was wrapped up in a big shawl, and had a thick veil over my head on account of neuralgia; I never felt so frightened in my life as when I saw the light put out, the door of the waiting-room locked, and the man walk away, and there I was left all alone.

It was very cold for only the end of September, and so dark that I could not see a yard ahead of me.

I hardly thought anyone would really trouble me, but I did feel dreadful to think of staying there all night.

Well, ma'am, it seemed to me I had been sitting there an hour when suddenly I heard a trap, or something, drive up. I tell you I jumped from my trunk then. A man came towards me, and I could just see that he was a young gentleman.

He took off his hat politely, and said, in a shy and very abrupt way, I thought, "I hear you want to get out to Mr. Hay's. I will drive you there."

I was so rejoiced and relieved that I could only say, "Thank you—thank you, sir!"

He hurried me into the carriage, put my trunk on behind, and drove off. He never said a word more to me; and though I was much obliged to him, I did not think it my place to begin the conversation.

We had driven a mile or more, I suppose, and it was now not quite so dark; a little moon was coming up, and I saw through the trees a church steeple, and I asked the young gentleman, "Is that Mr. Hay's church?"

He started, and answered, "Yes; haven't you ever been here before to know it?"

"No, sir," I said; "this is the first time I have ever been in this place. I am coming to nurse Mrs. Hay, and Mr. Hay wrote he would send someone to meet me to-night."

The young man said something very much like an oath, whipped up his horse, and dashed forward, though before we had been going so slow that I was afraid he would be all night on the road. He stopped all of a sudden, saying, "You must get out here; I can't drive up to the house. There it is, just ahead of you; your trunk I will put down at the gate, and someone can come out for it."

I was so amazed, that I got out of the carriage by myself; and actually, before I could say a word or thank him, he had turned round, and was tearing down the road.

I felt very much like sitting down on my trunk again, and trusting to luck. I could see a white house in front, but there was not a light in it.

I was afraid to open the gate; perhaps there was a dog about the yard that would rush and attack me.

At last I mustered up courage, and got to the verandah. Everything was in darkness about the house.

I knocked and knocked at the door. After a while, I heard someone coming; the door was unbarred, and I saw, as I supposed, Mr. Hay, with a light in his hand.

"Who's that?" he said.

"The nurse, Della," I answered.

"Good gracious! did you come to-night? I forgot all about you, and never sent anyone to the station."

I had heard he was absent minded, but I did feel vexed, and think it very shabby treatment. He showed me in, and I took a seat in the entry, and waited again while he went upstairs.

After a while, a lady came down who had evidently just gotten out of bed. She was very polite in saying how sorry she was that no one from the house had met me, and carried me to my room, but never offered me a thing to eat or drink, and I was just weak for a cup of tea. I slept heartily, however—I have learned to sleep under all circumstances, and generally get some snatches every night.

The next day, when I saw Mrs. Hay, she apologized sweetly for the mistake about my arrival, and for how badly I had been received, and seemed so sorry for it. She is such a nice, sweet lady!

"How did you get here, Della?" she asked me.

I told her how I had sat on my trunk on the station platform in the dark until a young gentleman drove up and offered to drive me to Mr. Hay's.

"But he acted so queer—never said a word to me after we started, or, if he did, I did not hear, for I am just a little deaf. When I asked him if that was the church he swore; and then drove so fast he nearly turned me out of the trap, and made me get out at your gate, left my trunk in the road, and I had to find my way to the house alone, scared every step I took, thinking perhaps a dog would bite me."

At the time there was a lady in the room, a Mrs. King. She seemed very much amused at my story, and wondered who the young man could have been.

Some weeks after I found Mrs. King with Mrs. Hay again, and they were laughing in the heartiest manner.

As I came in, Mrs. Hay said, "Do, Della, listen to this; it is the richest thing I ever heard. You remember the young man who brought you from the station the night you came here, and how strangely he acted? Well, Mrs. King has been telling me some more about it, and it is too funny!"

And she began laughing immoderately again.

I looked at Mrs. King, and asked her what it was, and she said, "Well, this is an extremely bashful and timid young man. He admires ladies, but is always afraid to meet them, and is always getting out of their way. Mrs. Hay's sister, Lena, was here last summer, and took the village by storm. Everyone was charmed with her. This young man never saw her but once, I believe, and was immediately quite smitten, but never could be induced to call upon her, or go out of his way to meet her. When she left, he consoled himself by saying that when she came again he was determined to know her.

"She was expected again this summer, but has been putting it off from month to month, until at last we heard she would be here positively the very week you came, but at the very last moment was detained, and she has not come yet. The young man lives near the station, and the night you were waiting there alone, one of the train hands stopped at his house, and said, in the kitchen, that a lady wanted to get out to Mr. Hay's, and as there was no one to take her, she would have to stay all night on the platform. It was repeated in the house by a servant; when the young man came in his sister told him, adding she was sure it was Lena Pinckney, and it was a shame no one had come for her, and that they must bring her at once to spend the night at their house.

"To his sister's surprise, he said he would harness the horse, and take her to Mr. Hay's himself.

"After awhile she heard him drive back furiously, and go to his room at once.

"The next morning she asked him if he had taken Lena safely home, and how he liked her; he only answered it was not Miss Pinckney, and would not say another word.

"I was visiting there the other day, and was telling your adventure, and the young lady who was in the room exclaimed, 'That must be the person my brother took for Lena.'

"Now the joke is all over the village, and the poor young man is being teased out of his life for mistaking nurse for Miss Pinckney."

I told Mrs. King it was very mean, his being laughed at for his kindness to me.

I know I was never more indebted to anyone in my life, and am sorry I never had a chance to thank him—indeed, ma'am, to this day I do not know his name.

KEEPING THE PEACE.—Some curious documents just found in the archives of the Paris prefecture of police throw an interesting and instructive light on the manner in which the streets of Paris were guarded during the night in the sixteenth century.

To begin with, there were stringent rules to the effect that each house should have only one door, and should be regularly inhabited. This being the case, it was a comparatively easy task to order that the dwellers in the different houses should in turn keep an eye on what was going on in their respective streets.

They were not compelled to tramp up and down the pavement like the modern policeman; the authorities were satisfied if they looked through their windows and watched all that was going on below. If the slightest cry were raised they opened their windows and rang their bells until their neighbors followed suit. The alarm spread from street to street, and soon all the bells in Paris were ringing, the windows were lit up, and the inhabitants, armed to the teeth, sallied forth, barring the road to the malefactors, who were almost always arrested.

We need hardly explain that the Paris of those days was Lilputian in comparison with what it is now; but what an uncomfortable way they had of keeping the peace in the sixteenth century! The remedy was positively worse than the disease, for it was hard that the inhabitants of one street should be awakened out of their first sleep because the dwellers in a remote alley imagined that something wrong was going on. One would fancy that in one quarter or another some noise at least must have been made every night. The slumbers of the Parisians must often have been wofully curtailed.

THE LAUGHING BOOK.

THE Chinese have a publication called the "Laughing Book," which is printed in Pekin. The jests from this treasured volume, a number of which have been translated, seem to bear a certain family resemblance to funny stories all the world over, just as some of the very best and most frequently told jokes of modern times are to be found in the writings of ancient Greeks, who perhaps stole them from still earlier jesters. Here are three of those Chinese jokes:

Two men, Chung and Kung, are warming themselves at the open stove. Chung, who is a person remarkable for his coolness and loquacity, says to Kung, who is an exceedingly hot-headed person, "My dear Kung, there is something which I would very much like to say to you. It relates to a circumstance which I have observed for a little time past, and have desired to mention to you. But, bearing in mind the somewhat fiery and quarrelsome disposition which is commonly attributed to you, I have hesitated to express myself. However, I have resolved that at last if I do not mention the matter to you I shall do wrong, and I have consequently determined to ask your permission to speak to you about it."

"Well, what is it?"

"Your coat, my dear Kung," says Chung, quietly, "is on fire!"

"For pity's sake!" exclaimed Kung, angrily, jumping up and finding his coat nearly burned off, "why in the world didn't you tell me before?"

"There it goes! What a frightful temper!" Chung murmured as he moved away; "folks told me quite right about you."

The second anecdote illustrates Chinese subtlety, and suggests that some negro minstrel troupes must have drawn upon this book. A man who had stolen a cow was subjected to the torture of the "kang." A passer-by, observing his sad state, asked him, "What did you do?"

"Oh! nothing; I just found an old piece of rope on the road and picked it up."

"And is it possible that they have punished you in this way for simply picking up an old piece of rope?"

"Yes; only they found a cow at the end of the rope."

An American author contributes to the "China Review" some short stories, which are curious as examples of the humor of the Chinese:

The Lord of Hades considered a certain spirit to have been a great sinner indeed, so he adjudged that he should re-enter the world and become a poor scholar with five children.

"Is not that rather light punishment!" remonstrated an angel.

"No," said his Eminence: "the five hungry children will soon drive him mad."

Chang and Chung mutually agreed to start a brewery. Said Chang to Chung, "You supply the rice and I will furnish the water."

"But," quired Chung, "if the profits are divided according to the capital embarked, I am afraid it will be difficult to apportion your share."

"Oh! I'm not afraid," said Chang; "when the brew is over give me the water; you can have the remainder."

A man was seized by a tiger. The victim's son took his bow and pursued. "Hit him in the leg," cried the father, "or else you'll spoil the market value of the skin."

A bibulous individual on entering a restaurant noticed that the wineCups were small. After seating himself, he gave vent to a most demoniacal series of howls and groans.

"What is the matter?" asked the startled landlord.

"Ah!" answered the man, "my father, a hale, hearty man, met his death at a friend's table by accidentally swallowing a small wineCup, so whenever I see similar ones the memory of the sad event overcomes me."

It is needless to add that the cup was replaced by a larger one.

A hard drinker dreamed that he had become possessed of a bottle of genuine stuff, but, determined to enjoy it thoroughly, he had begun to heat it. During the heating process he awoke.

"Hoo, hoo," he groaned, "if I had known this was to happen, I would have drunk it cold."

A servant did not fill a guest's cup to the brim. The latter, holding it up, remarked, "This cup is too deep," and broke a piece off. "How is that?" cried the host. "If the upper part can't hold liquor, of what use is it?" was the retort.

THE BANSHEE OF IRELAND.—The banshee is a species of aristocratic fairy who, in the shape of a little hideous old woman, has been known to appear and heard to sing in a mournful, supernatural voice, under the windows of great houses, to warn the family that some of them were soon to die. In the last century every great family in Ireland had a banshee who attended regularly, but latterly their visits and songs have been discontinued.

Scientific and Useful.

RUBBER.—The coating of a rubber umbrella or a gossamer cloak or coat may be mended by applying a preparation of damar varnish and asphaltum with a little turpentine in about equal quantities.

FENCE-WIRE.—To protect fence-wire use well-boiled linseed-oil, properly laid on; if necessary color with umber. The iron should first be well cleaned and freed from all dust and dirt; the oil should be of the best quality and well-boiled, without litharge or any drier being added.

A GAS EXTINGUISHING CLOCK.—An arrangement which can be applied to any clock to enable it to turn off gas, has been devised. The device is easily set, and it enables a person to turn off the gas at a predetermined time. As gas is applied to many purposes now, this will be found a convenience sometimes.

DYNAMITE.—The recent tearing down of a New Hampshire manufactory by means of dynamite demonstrates a new use for the explosive. The concussion completely separated the bricks and did not seem to injure them in the least. The charges were put in holes dug in the foundation under the brick walls, and the number of cartridges was graded according to the number of bricks in the wall to be demolished.

GAS AND CARS.—A new invention for the propelling of street cars is in the application of the gas engine to a moving street car. All such attempts have failed heretofore for the reason that the gas engine starts and stops too slowly. In this case the engine will be in motion continuously, and the power will be thrown off and on, as the occasion may require, by the use of movable friction wheels geared on an endless link belt. This belt is to be attached to the engine. Ordinary illuminating gas will be used.

WHOOPING-COUGH.—A new method of treating whooping-cough is in fumigating with sulphur the sleeping-room, as well as any other room used by the patient, together with his bedding, clothes, toys, and everything which he uses. The sulphur is simply burned in the apartments, while the clothes are hung up in any convenient manner, and the rooms remain closed, and subjected to the fumes for about five hours. Everything is then well aired, and the rooms are once more ready for the occupation of the sufferer.

DYNAMITE IN BUILDING.—A French military engineer has put dynamite to a new use in building foundations in wet ground. In the construction of fortifications at Lyons a hole is bored in the wet ground ten or twelve feet deep and ten feet and a half in diameter. The explosion of a string of dynamite cartridges enlarges this hole to about a yard in diameter, and forces the water so far out beyond the sides of the cavity that at least half an hour is required for it to find its way back. This gives the workman time to introduce a quickly setting concrete. The process is very rapid.

Farm and Garden.

BARBS.—Barb-wire fences must be quite close, near the ground, to turn sheep, as they will venture through where a pig would be stopped, the wool being a protection against injury.

GOATS.—In mountainous sections, where sheep cannot thrive, it is claimed that the keeping of goats can be made profitable, especially for their skins. The goat can pick up its subsistence and find food where other animals would starve.

KEROSENE AND POULTRY.—Kerosene is of great help in the proper care of poultry. Their nest boxes should be oiled with it as a preventive of vermin. A few drops occasionally in the drinking water will prevent colds or roup, and when applied to scaly legs it effects a cure, while it is highly recommended as a cure for cholera.

FOWLS.—Fowls are machines to produce eggs and flesh, and we might as well expect cloth from a factory that has no wool or cotton, as to expect eggs from hens not supplied with food. Liberal feeding means liberal profits; neglect means loss of what you do give them. As a rule, feed well or kill the flock. This should be the rule, for the results are as sure to follow as day is sure to follow sunrise.

SWINE.—Swine feeding can be made safe and certain by following the practices that experience has demonstrated to be trustworthy and not otherwise. Crowding corn, and nothing but corn, into hogs, from the time of birth to the time of slaughtering, is unnatural and unreasonable, and many are following that plan every year, to their terrible cost and to the great detriment of the constitution and healthfulness generally of American swine.

KIND TREATMENT.—Any domestic animal understands and appreciates kind treatment. It is no use to say they are "only dumb brutes". It is true, they cannot talk, but, like dumb or blind men, their intelligence in other respects is doubled. You can make friends of all your animals if you take the trouble to do so, and if you should ever feel lonely you can banish this feeling by going round among your beasts.

THE LEFT FOOT.—The saying, "You got out of bed the wrong foot foremost", or with the left leg foremost, can be traced back 3,000 years. The right foot was associated in all antiquity with good luck, and the left with bad fortune. Hence to put the left leg out of bed first was a bad sign.

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Sample copies for the purpose will be sent to those who wish them.

Past and to Come.

All times and seasons should be marked among sensible men by proper views of themselves, their circumstances and their destinies. It was for this they have been gifted not only with perceptions to see present events, but reflect on those that are past, and by the just exercise of fancy to try and forecast the good and evil, the light and shadow of what is to come. Those who make a right use of their faculties in these respects, with every passing moment possibly, and certainly with every passing day, are more likely to extract a higher pleasure out of life, better prepare themselves for its battles, more wisely and beneficially assist others, and altogether walk their way in the world with more enlightenment to render bright its waste places than their less thoughtful fellows.

But while this duty of keeping the bodily eye and the mind's eye open, as it were, under every minute of time and circumstance of existence is incumbent upon all, a great majority of mankind—no matter what the cause which has led to the habit—seem inclined to postpone the practice, so far as they indulge in it at all, to certain occasions and festivals. In the ordinary months, and weeks and days they are well content to travel in the ruts that custom has made easy, although they lead exactly in the direction they should not, and never think until one of these great anniversaries confronts them, that they are anything else than tread-mill horses, traveling up and down, and round and round, in the one weary, unchanging form, with as little thought of the future as of the past.

But when it so happens that Christmas announces itself, there is a certain unloosing of the chains of habit. Mankind, imbibing something of the divine spirit of the season, halts in his course, and recognizes there are voices, singing to him from the o'ergone days, worth listening to, and possibilities of love and kindness that can build in made-happy hearts glorious structures of gratitude for the future. Under the mystic power of the thought this spirit engenders, the Cherubims that stand with flaming swords by the entrance of Earth's Paradise sleep upon their posts and let the world-released soul of man for a moment taste its delights and glories.

But the great day goes, and back again come the claims of practical life, the ruts of custom, and he tends to forget what it should be sweetest to remember and retain.

Still it is ordained that right upon its heels shall come another of these great anniversaries for thought and consideration—the New Year. As though so arranged in mercy by Heaven, that would further forge the iron of human nature, already heated by the ardor of Christmas, the New Year festival comes ere the metal has quite grown cold. The scale of habit has not yet reencrusted it, and it is still sufficiently pliable to take new, and better, and nobler shapes, if the hammer of determination is plied with right good will.

Of all the seasons to which many postpone a study of that standing with the world, with time and Heaven, which should be the study of every moment of their lives, New Years is, perhaps, the most in vogue. There is something so apparently well adapted to then opening a new account with ourselves in relation to our destiny that we can hardly wonder the custom should be so common as it is.

But while making this date the anniversary of such thoughts cannot be a substitute for that better plan, which makes every moment we live a minor New Year for the taking of better resolutions, it is something to be glad of that there is such an occasion and that it is taken at all. The fault is not so much in piling all the reflection of the year upon a single day or a single week, as that the new resolves so hastily thrown together will be just as quick to fall apart. Herein lies the danger of deferring our purposes of amendment. What has grown by slow accretions through a year or years of effort has the stability of the oak. What is planted in the sentimental warmth and atmosphere of a New Year determination, like Jonah's gourd, may quickly rise; but is also, unfortunately, just as apt to very quickly die.

Well it is for those who make their every waking moment a New Year's Day of thought and resolve to do better, if need be, for the future lastingly. And well also for those will it be who, though postponing till this day their resolve to make the remains of their dead past the stepping-stones to something higher yet, cling unflinchingly to that resolve until the end. It is a virtue or a vice of habit, as the case may be, that it makes all things easy. Determine, then, that this year shall be the golden one of your lives, and this determination habitually held to, will make it easier to resolve the future shall have nought but golden years in all its crown.

IN all talk about persons, it is their merits that we should hasten to disclose, their good deeds that we should gladly unfold. In all discussion on character, the good should come into prominence. In all our uttered hopes for the future, our highest ideals should receive the emphasis. Truth, not error; light, not darkness; love, not hate, should be our themes. So may we increase and perpetuate all that is good by frank utterance, while evil will decrease and disappear under the thick drapery of silence.

SOBRIETY and tranquility tend to self-command and that genuine self-respect which has in it nothing of self-worship, for it is the reverence that each man ought to feel for the nature that God has given him, and for the laws of that nature. It is one thing to plough and sow, with the expectation of the harvest in due season when the year shall have come round; it is another to ransack the ground in the gold-field, with the heated hope and craving for vast returns to-morrow or to-day.

TO-DAY, to-morrow, every day, to thousands the end of the world is close at hand. And why should we fear it? We walk here, as it were, in the crypts of life; at times, from the great cathedral above us, we can hear the organ and the chanting choir; we see the light stream through the open door, when some friend goes up before us; and shall we fear to mount the narrow staircase of the grave that leads us out of this uncertain twilight into life eternal?

BE avaricious of time: do not give any moment without receiving it in value; only allow the hours to go from you with as much regret as you give to your gold; do not allow a single day to pass without increasing the treasure of your knowledge and virtue. The use of time is a debt we contract from birth, and it should only be paid with the interest that our life has accumulated.

WE are so constituted that, the more our animal nature is curbed and restrained, the greater becomes the soul's supremacy over it; but, on the other hand, the more we indulge it and yield to its demands, the more we lose our power of self-control, until at length the will is utterly dethroned, and we are carried headlong down the path to hopeless disaster.

THE man who is so conscious of the rectitude of his intentions as to be willing to open his bosom to the inspection of the world is in possession of one of the strongest pillars of a decided character. The course of such a man will be firm and steady, because he has nothing to fear from the world, and is sure of the approbation and support of Heaven.

BY striving to obtain and to cherish clear and true ideas of right, by emphasizing them in our thoughts, following them in our conduct, and diffusing them through our influence, we strike the strongest and most effective blows at every form of wrong-doing.

THE greatest loss of time is delay and expectation, which depends upon the future. We let go the present, which we have in our power, and look forward to that which depends upon chance; and so relinquish a certainty for an uncertainty.

No man can tell but he that loves his children how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges.

IT is a common error, of which a wise man will beware, to measure the worth of our neighbor by his conduct towards ourselves.

How white are the fair robes of Charity as she walketh amid the lowly habitations of the poor!

The World's Happenings.

A Nebraska genius has invented an automatic cow-milker.

A Montreal youth 21 years old is serving his fifteenth term in prison.

The death of a man named Ghostly is chronicled in an Indiana paper.

Electricity can travel 288,000 miles per second under favorable circumstances.

A single day of heavy fog makes the city of London pay $308,000 more for gas.

About 300,000,000 persons in China spend less than $1.50 a month each for food.

A Denver clergyman recently characterized playing-cards as "the devil's new testament."

Salisbury Cathedral was recently deprived of its choir of boys owing to an epidemic of mumps.

In Charleston, S. C., $150,000 in Confederate bills were sold the other day at 25 cents per thousand.

Some influential London physicians have started a movement to write prescriptions in English instead of Latin.

A law has been passed in Waldeck, Germany, forbidding the granting of a marriage license to a person addicted to the liquor habit.

Baron Berthwick, a Scotch peer of Parliament, whose title dates from 1462, has become a member of a firm of London stock brokers.

Real estate agents draw the line at renting a fine house for a few weeks, during which time somebody's daughter is married in it and departs.

The Great Eastern, which originally cost $3,409,000, and was sold a year ago for $125,000, has again been sold at auction in Liverpool for $100,000.

A citizen of Fremont, Neb., who got drunk and froze his feet so that they had to be amputated, has just recovered $2,000 damages from the man who sold him the liquor.

Urbana, O., has a "genuine philanthropist." He owns an ice pond, and has offered its free use to soldiers and soldiers' widows, while from others he exacts a fee of ten cents.

A supposed ignis fatuus which startled the citizens of the village of Nantmeal, Pa., the other evening, turned out to be a lighted candle which two boys had tied to the bough of a tree.

Mr. and Mrs. Bates, of South Hanover, N. H., are 92 years old. They were born in the same town, on the same day, at the same hour and, as the old gentleman says, "were married at the same time."

A squirrel's nest which cost $7,000 was found in Pennsylvania by the heirs of a miser who had put this amount of bank bills in a box and hidden it in a tree. A squirrel had utilized the box and torn the bank bills into shreds.

An amusement manager in Chicago has adopted a gift feature. He acquired title to a large tract of land in California, and now offers a house lot to each purchaser of a reserved seat ticket for a specified period at his theatre.

At Morristown, N. J., the other day, a child fell from the third story of a house to the pavement and was only slightly injured, while a neighbor's child at about the same time slipped from an ordinary house chair and broke its collar bone.

The first prosecution of a member of the Salvation Army under an ordinance passed several months ago by the common council of Janesville, Wis., resulted in the conviction of the defendant. The ordinance, it is said, prohibits marching on the streets.

Calvin Winningham, a young man who was chopping wood with his brother, near Ashland, Idaho, caught his heel and fell backward. In his fall his axe struck him in the neck, severing the jugular vein, and he died in death in spite of all that his brother could do.

Last summer a law went into effect in Jersey City providing for the payment of police salaries during time lost on account of illness. Since then the number of absentees through sickness has surprisingly increased, and the Police Board has now ordered an investigation.

In order to decide as to the ownership of a hog that was claimed by two persons, a Kentucky justice released the porker and let it have its own way. It made a break for the sty of one of the contestants, but the other has appealed from the judgment of both the court and the hog.

A Swiss watchmaker has invented a electric illuminator for watch dials. A small electric lamp is fitted in the watch case where it will light up the dial, when, by touching the case with the charm, connection is made through the chain with a small battery carried in the waistcoat pocket.

The Piute Indians of Nevada are engaged in their annual rabbit hunt. It is their custom to form a circle ten or twelve miles in diameter and gradually contract it until large numbers of rabbits have been driven together in the centre. Then the slaughter begins, the little animals being killed in thousands.

There are in New York no less than 300 firms which receive more than 1000 letters a day the year round; more than 100 firms that receive 2500 letters, 50 firms that receive between 3000 and 4000 letters, and 1 firm which receives an average of 8000 letters a day, the number frequently running above 10,000 in the busy season.

There is a little negro in Macon, Ga., named Berry Bowden, aged about 12 years, who has a most remarkable mouth. When fully opened the distance from the corner of the mouth to the lobe of the ear is less than half an inch. He puts his fist in his mouth with ease, and can hold two eggs in his mouth without any difficulty.

A Reform Burial Association has been organized in Cleveland, Ohio, for the purpose of "stopping the extravagances now existing as to burial expenditures." Among other things the members agree to attend the funeral of fellow-members when invited, but will not ride in any conveyance hired by the family of the deceased, nor will carriages be hired except for the family of deceased and the pall-bearers. They also agree to refrain from all ostentatious display of mourning apparel, decorations, etc.

BEYOND.

BY E. O. J.

Autumn is dying; Winter is come;
Dead leaves are flying; the rivers are dumb;
The wind's like a knife—one's finger's grow numb;
There is snow on the mountain, ice in the pond.
Winter is with us, but Spring is beyond.

The Old Year is dying; it's glory is dead.
The days are all dying—their glory has fled.
The bushes grow bare, as the berries grow red;
There is snow on the mountain, ice in the pond.
The Old Year is dying, but the New is beyond.

We are all growing old, and life slips away.
There is bare time for work, and still less for play;
Though we think we grow wiser, the longer we stay;
But there's life in us yet—no need to despond;
This world may wax old, but Heaven is beyond.

Free From the Brand.

BY BERTIE BAYLE.

WHEN I was a very little girl I was frequently taken by a maiden aunt to visit an old lady who lived in a house in a street near Bryanston Square.

Young as I was, the many weary hours I was obliged to spend in Miss Mabel Littleton's parlor have impressed every object upon my memory; and, doubtless, the dark tints in which all things were necessarily painted have contributed to their preservation in my mind, since the remembrance of dull scenes will long outlast that of gay ones, even as sombre colors will adhere to the canvas, while bright ones fade beneath the touch of time.

Miss Mabel Littleton was a maiden lady of independent means.

She inhabited the house in which her parents had lived and died, and antiquity was stamped upon every article of furniture.

I can almost fancy that I see now the fantastic Turkey carpet, which, eked out with a border of green baize, covered the floor; the straight-backed mahogany chairs, with their white chintz covers; the thin-legged tables; the bright brass fire-irons; the square Japan cabinet, curiously inlaid with mother-of-pearl; the tall perpendicular fire-screen, worked in worsted—the device, an enormous cat with a mouse in her paw; and I am sure I shall never forget the quaintly-carved ivory head, with its curved fingers and long, slender handle, which always hung at the sides of the fire-screen.

Miss Littleton was not one who pined in single blessedness.

Her figure still bore some traces of the roses and the lilies which had once adorned it, and her rotund frame had gained in dignity what it had lost in youthful grace.

Her attire was characterized by extreme neatness.

Her dark silk dress always looked as glossy as if just from the hands of the dress-maker; her muslin neckerchiefs, though starched as stiff as buckram, were as transparent as glass.

A pleasant, cheerful lady was Miss Mabel Littleton.

Seated in her high-backed chair, with the tall screen protecting her good-humored face from the heat of a blazing fire, her knitting-needles in her hand, and an embroidered satin bag hanging on the arm of her chair, she was a perfect picture of contentment.

Everybody liked her, and she was a very useful woman in her way.

To the poor who could work she gave employment, and thus kept alive the feeling of independence which is the last treasure left the unfortunate.

To the sick and infirm she rendered effectual aid, not by bestowing money only, which their very necessities would prevent them from using to advantage, but by appropriating her time, as well as her means, to making comfortable garments, and preparing wholesome food with her own hands; by visiting them in their houses; by teaching them lessons of gratitude and contentment, which pensioners on the world's bounty can never learn from the almoners of associated charities.

I have said that in my childhood I spent many a weary hour in the old lady's company.

Miss Littleton and my aunt would sit discussing the merits of the last fashions and other topics, while poor little I was left to amuse myself as best I could.

I used to settle the mandarins on the chimney-piece nodding, and watch them till I almost dropped asleep from sympathy.

Then I would try to count the birds of Paradise which dropped their long tails over the paper on the wall, until "thought was lost in calculation's maze."

Sometimes I resorted to the books which lay on the table, but they had little attractions to a merry child who was content to enjoy existence, even as the birds and butterflies, without at all thinking about it.

I remember, however, a few pleasant scenes which I enjoyed through Miss Mabel Littleton's kindness and mirthful spirit.

Once she took us to an upper room, and, unlocking a huge trunk, amused my aunt by displaying innumerable suits of baby linen, the frocks of fine cambric, with long pointed stomachers stitched full of whalebone; the caps worked in bee-stitch, but without borders, which Miss Mabel's mother, out of a kind regard to the welfare of posterity, had made for the future grandchildren when her only daughter was a mere girl.

The old lady little thought that the lapse of more than half a century would find her daughter fading in single blessedness, and the neatly-made garments untouched, save by the hand of time.

On another occasion Miss Littleton opened her India cabinet to display some antique love-tokens, and I was wild with delight at being allowed to rummage among the paste shoe-buckles and the gold sleeve-buttons which had belonged to her father and brothers, the mourning rings and jet black lockets, which were all that remained of the loved of earlier days, the broken ornaments and antique jewelry that had formerly shone in many a brilliant scene of gaiety.

There was something in the atmosphere of that gloomy room, from which a neighboring wall shut out the cheerful things on earth, yet the children of my brain are very apt to assume a sombre garb ere I have finished their attire.

Notwithstanding the gloom and uneasiness which I so often encountered, I never declined an invitation to Miss Mabel.

This readiness arose partly from the consciousness that I was a favorite with the old lady, and partly from the certainty of getting good entertainment for the body, if not for the mind.

Age had come upon her "frosty, but kindly," and while she looked back upon past life, even as the traveller pauses upon an eminence to review the road he has just trodden, she cherished a fellow-feeling with those who were just entering the rugged path.

She had learned to judge of the present by the experience of the past, and while she had not forgotten the errors and follies which belong to the season of youth, she could blend counsel with sympathy.

Many a lesson of life have I learnt from her lips; and if they profited me little, the fault was not in the sower, but in the soil of the heart, which allowed weeds to spring up and choke the good seed.

One of the reminiscences now occurs to me, which, as it exhibits a most singular retribution of a fault usually considered venial in society, I will record. I will give it as nearly as I can in the old lady's words; but, alas! the tone, and look, and manner which gave expression to every word are lost for ever!

* * * * * *

Isabel Le Breton was a beauty and an heiress.

The close intimacy which subsisted between our families first led to our friendship, and though she was several years my senior, we were almost inseparable.

I have since thought—perhaps I wronged her—that Isabel made me her chosen companion less for my good qualities than defects.

I certainly must have been an admirable foil to her; for nothing could be in greater contrast than my dumpy figure, my deep red cheeks, and my gray eyes, with her stately form, her rich cream-tinted complexion, her perfect regularity of feature, and her raven-black eyes and hair.

Nor was the disparity in our dispositions less striking.

Educated in retirement, I was merely a simple-hearted, affectionate girl, with the hoydenish spirit of childhood softened down into the buoyant mirth of uninterrupted cheerfulness, and actuated by impulse rather than reflection or calculation.

But Isabel was as cold and calm as some exquisite piece of sculpture.

Rarely excited either to pleasure or pain, her brow was always placid as a summer lake, and the bland smile which sat on her beautiful lip was unchanging as if carved in stone.

I think I never saw her angry; but they who deemed this placid demeanor the effect of an amiable temper were amazingly mistaken.

I have often heard her express her surprise that anyone should "take the trouble" to get into a passion; and yet I have listened to the most biting sarcasms from her lips, while her countenance wore as gentle an expression as ever visited the face of a sleeping child.

The characteristic of Isabel's temper was inertness. She hated the exertion of arousing herself either to evince satisfaction or displeasure; and but for the one master-passion which ruled her heart, she would probably have gone through life as one of those amiable, gentle creatures who are all sweetness in their outward demeanor, and who reserve their hidden bitterness for the privacy of domestic life.

Isabel's calm exterior afforded the best of all concealment for her real character.

She seemed rather to await than to seek admiration, and it was scarcely possible to believe that the cold and passionless beauty was in heart a consummate coquette.

Even as the dark tide flows on unceasingly, though the icy fetters of winter have stilled its surface, so beneath her calm indifference was hidden a restless and insatiable desire for admiration.

But the adulation and homage which a young beauty can always command in society was not enough for Isabel.

Her vanity was not to be satisfied by an ordinary sacrifice.

She required her admirers to become lovers, and an offer of marriage could alone be received as a sufficient evidence of her power.

Descended from an ancient family (of which, by the way, she was exceedingly proud), possessed of wealth and gifted with beauty, you may easily suppose she had no reason to complain of neglect; and she put in practice every art which female iniquity could devise to secure those whom her charms had attracted.

At about the time I first entered society she had already rejected many suitors, and it was one of her favorite practices to gather a few of her young friends around her awhile she carelessly tossed over for our inspection copies of verses, *billet doux*, and other testimonials to the power of her beauty.

If there be anything that ought to expose a woman to lasting contempt, it is the unpardonable breach of confidence in which Isabel indulged.

The trust reposed in her by a suitor for her hand, whether his offer be rejected or accepted, should be held most sacred. If accepted, it is enough that her nearest friends are made aware of it; if rejected, none—not even the sister of her childhood—should be informed of it.

If counsel be required by the young heart, let it be sought from the mother, who has watched over the expanding bud of her daughter's affections even as she once kept her vigil beside the cradle of her infancy. But when a man unlocks the secret chambers of his heart, and lays open his dearest affections to the gaze of her whom he so loves, no careless eye should be allowed to behold the treasure, even though she value it not.

It has always seemed to me that one of the strongest proofs of a woman's heartlessness is afforded by a long list of rejected lovers.

Women are quick in discerning their own power; and one who professes correct principles and kindly feelings will endeavor to prevent an offer which does not mean to accept, rather than wait to reject it as a homage to her beauty.

Men are seldom disposed to make an actual proffer of their hand without some prospect of success, and any woman possessed of the tact of her sex can deliberately hold out encouragement to the one whom she prefers, while she opposes the barrier of friendship to others.

Isabel's tact in "playing her victim" was unequalled.

While she never departed from her quiet manner, she yet managed to adapt herself so well to the peculiarities of her admirers that each believed her to be studying his tastes and moulding herself to his standard of perfection.

Then she was a matchless manœuvrer in the arrangement of time and place for securing her prize.

In the gay party and amid the excitement of mirth the snare was laid for the frivolous; the moonlight walk and the fascination of sentiment were lures for the enthusiastic; the quiet household circle and the rational pleasures of home were traps for more practical admirers.

I have often tried to analyze the secret of her influence. It was not alone the spell of beauty, for I have seen others equal to her in personal attractions who were yet completely overlooked in her presence; it was not genius, for, though intelligent she was by no means gifted with superior intellect; it was not the variety of her accomplishments, for in all the higher attainments of the mind she was very deficient, and her knowledge of mere feminine accomplishments was very superficial.

What was it, then, which bowed down the aspiring intellect, subjugated the pride of self-love, and compelled the homage of the wise and the ignorant, the warm-hearted and the selfish, the ardent boy and the calculating man.

The talisman by which all this was effected was tact.

Tact in studying character—tact in adapting herself to its peculiarities—tact in discerning and flattering the self-love which lurks in the hearts of all men.

This was the spell she used—a spell to be purchased only by the sacrifice of all the good which belongs to our nature.

Isabel had reached her twenty-fourth year without having formed any attachment likely to end in marriage, when she became engaged in a flirtation, which proved more serious in the end than she had designed.

A young gentleman, who bore the name of Claude Randlewood, who was said to be the son of a rich colonial merchant, was introduced to our acquaintance.

His delicate health which had been seriously injured by grief for the recent loss of his mother, had induced his father, who doted on him with a love almost approaching to idolatry, to send him to England, in the hope that change of scene might restore him.

Claude Randlewood was not more than twenty years of age, with nothing to attract attention in his personal appearance except a pair of dark luminous eyes, which seemed to gleam with almost supernatural brightness from beneath his overhanging brows.

His character seemed as feeble as his physical nature. Possessed of a highly poetic temperament, and a morbid sensibility, which led him to pour forth his exaggerated feelings in verse, he was without the genius that alone could give him rank among the sons of song.

But bred up in strict retirement, beneath the eye of a fond mother, his studies directed by one of the most unworldly scholars that ever wore a priest's cowl, and his self-esteem exaggerated by the love of his father, he had learned to consider himself a past of no mean order.

Utterly ignorant of society, and totally unprepared for its rude collisions, the pride of intellect was strangely blended with the timidity of the solitary student.

He believed himself far superior to the most of those with whom he associated, and yet he was conscious that in the power of pleasing he was far excelled even by the greatest dolts.

The sensibility to his physical defects, and his belief in his intellectual superiority, gave a degree of awkwardness to his demeanor which often exposed him to the ridicule of his associates.

But unprepossessing as were his manners and appearance, he was not too insignificant for Isabel's rapacious desire of conquest.

Her superior knowledge of the world gave her a decided advantage over the unpractical boy, and she did not fail to avail herself of it.

We were in the habit at that time of passing a part of every summer at some fashionable watering-place; and when we left town for Eastbourne, Claude Randlewood was so far infatuated with the beautiful Isabel as to follow us, and take lodgings in our immediate neighborhood.

Here, in the seclusion of the country, with no rival claims upon her attention, Isabel had full leisure to rivet her charms upon her romantic admirer.

His guilelessness of character rendered her task an easy one, and she found but little difficulty in adapting herself to his tastes and habits.

She became an ardent admirer of poetry, a diligent student of all kinds of literature, deplored her wasted time, and lamented her want of talent, and all this with an imitable grace which could not fail to captivate the senses of the shy and sensitive boy.

She applied to him for information on many subjects, perused his verses with enthusiastic applause, and took care that he should see her beautiful eyes suffused with tears by the exquisite pathos of his lament for his lost mother.

Imagine the effect of such arts upon a proud and bashful, imaginative youth.

Claude soon became the devoted slave of Isabel, and she spared no opportunity of exacting this homage. She loved to express the most *outre* and extravagant desires only that she might observe the readiness with which his wealth was squandered at her slightest wish.

Not content with this, she even laid his

mind under tribute, and at one time positively forbade his appearing before her unless he brought her a new copy of verses each day.

Claude sought to obey her in this requisition also, and you can suppose how much bad poetry was perpetrated to satisfy her whim.

Isabel used to take his delicately-written verses with extreme graciousness, read them with apparent feeling, and place them in her bosom until the delighted boy departed, when she would withdraw them from their concealment, and make them the subjects of many a merry jest as she threw the paper into her escritoire, already full of love-tokens and letters.

When Isabel returned to town, she carried Claude as if chained to her chariot wheels, and it seemed to afford her infinite gratification to expose him to the raillery of her less sensitive lovers.

But Claude seemed to live in a perfect trance of happiness.

Isabel was his thought by day and his dream by night, and with the romance of youthful passion he chose to indulge his vague and beautiful visions of joy as long as possible without mingling with them the commonplace realities of life.

The time at length came when Isabel wearied of her poetic lover; and then came the coldness, pique, and jealousy that arouse the ungoverned heart to frenzy.

Claude had wooed her in the language of song, and he now demanded in plain prose an answer to his suit, scarcely doubting that it would ensure his future happiness.

What was his surprise, therefore, when he met with a prompt and decided refusal!

Half-maddened by such an unexpected downfall of his hopes, the passionate youth poured forth earnest entreaties, which were coldly and almost insultingly checked.

A torrent of reproaches, such as could only issue from a bitterly-outraged heart, now burst from his lips, and the response was a series of those keen and cutting sarcasms which sometimes have power to sever the very heart-strings.

He went out from her presence in a state of mind almost approaching to insanity.

Disappointed affection, shame, sorrow, and indignation against his unworthy mistress, and a bitter disgust of life, took entire possession of him.

Too weak-minded to struggle manfully against the pangs which assailed him; unsupported by that moral courage which can teach a brave man to endure life even in the midst of torture; dreading the ridicule and mortification to which she had threatened to expose him by means of his passionate verses, and conscious how entirely he had put it in her power to make him a mark for the finger of scorn among the volatile foplings of the day, he madly threw away his life.

The morning after he parted with Isabel Le Breton, he was found dead in his room.

An empty phial on his table, and the sickly odor imparted by the deadly drug, alone told the manner of his death.

Nothing was found which could give a clue to the cause of this rash act.

It was proved on the inquest that late in the evening he had called up a servant, and given him a letter to take to the post-office.

The letter was for his father; and the servant, when he entered the room, observed him busied in burning letters and papers, but there was nothing in his manner indicating insanity or distress.

This was all the information that could be elicited, for not a scrap of paper was found which could throw any light upon the matter.

Only those few who were admitted to the confidence of Isabel could surmise the truth; but, of course, it was never allowed to become a subject of public remark, and it was impossible to judge from her demeanor whether she really felt herself guilty.

Soon after this event the illness of my mother confined me to her chamber, and finally rendered a sea voyage necessary; so that before her health was sufficiently restored to permit me to mingle in society again, nearly a year had elapsed.

To my surprise, I found Isabel Le Breton again absorbed in the conquest of a new lover.

Major Langton Reeves had been introduced to her by some casual acquaintance, and he was too attractive a prize to be easily dropped.

He was one of those men sometimes met in society whom time seems to forget, or else to spare for their pre-eminent beauty.

Tall and finely proportioned, with a figure sufficiently inclining to *embonpoint* to denote that he had passed the earliest prime of manhood, but with a cheek so unfurrowed, a brow so smooth, and locks as raven-black as ever boyhood wore, it was quite impossible to conjecture his real age.

Whether he was too well practiced in female wiles to be gained by such lures as Isabel spread, or whether he was of too cold a temperament to be excited by women's charms, I know not; but I soon perceived that he was not likely to be easily ensnared.

This indifference towards her even approached contempt, and the sarcastic remarks which occasionally dropped from his lips as he watched the frivolous beings who flattered around her were well calculated to arouse her pride.

Resentment now became a powerful auxiliary to vanity, and Isabel determined that, cost what it would, Major Reeves should be made to feel her power.

But, for once, she had met with an equal match.

The Major understood the arts of coquetry as well as herself, and it was amusing to an unconcerned spectator to watch the movement of the opposing parties.

The Major, it was said, had been educated in Paris, and if so, he had, doubtless learned there the lessons which he was now practising.

He was certainly well fitted to create a sensation in society.

His conversation was that of a man who had seen much of life in all its varied shapes. Adventures by sea and land were but as household themes to him.

He drew caricatures with infinite humor. His voice was one of unrivalled richness and sweetness.

Add to these the advantages of a noble person, and a reserved, almost mysterious, bearing, and you will easily understand the interest which he excited.

There was a careless grace in his manner of touching a few simple chords on the guitar, as an accompaniment to his French and Spanish songs, which could not fail of attracting the notice of all who beheld him, and the indifference with which he seemed to display his accomplishments, as if led to exhibit them by accident, was a most consummate piece of acting.

Isabel's arts at length recoiled upon herself.

The interest she had so often feigned she at length really felt, and while attempting to entangle the affections of the impracticable Major Reeves, involved herself in an inextricable maze.

Softened, as it would seem, by the unaffected tenderness of Isabel, he at last seemed to throw aside the coldness in which he had enwrapped himself; and it soon became evident that the game of coquetry would probably end in a serious attachment between the two players.

Haughty to a fault, and entirely regardless of censure, Isabel did not hesitate to evince her partiality for the stranger by every possible method, while his growing regard for her was apparently repressed, and he seemed constantly struggling to overcome it.

This was the master-stroke of his policy for his fine person and attractive manner were scarcely more winning to Isabel's heart than his mysterious bearing, his unconquerable coldness, and his reluctant submission to the irresistible power of affection.

In vain Isabel's friends pointed out to her the folly of thus yielding up her love to a man whom nobody knew.

The long slumbering passions of Isabel's nature were now fully awakened, and they seemed to have gained redoubled strength from their long repose.

She loved Major Reeves, and she was proud to exhibit her affection in every mode which her ingenuity could devise.

In his presence, her wonted calmness was exchanged for a restless and feverish excitement.

She watched his very look, and listened to the accents of his voice as if her very existence depended on them.

At length I heard that Major Reeves had offered himself to Isabel, and was accepted.

No inquiry had been made respecting his character, rank, or fortune.

Heart-sick with hope deferred, Isabel had joyfully listened to his suit, and ere he had half urged his claims to her hand had gladly yielded it.

She made no inquiries, because she would not heed anything except her passion. She feared lest some obstacle might start up between them, and she resolved to trust for the best without asking questions, the answers to which might mar her happiness.

She was an orphan, and the widowed aunt with whom she had always resided had no power to control her wayward will.

Preparations were immediately commenced for celebrating the nuptials in a style of unwonted magnificence.

Invitations to a very large number of friends were issued three weeks before the day appointed for the wedding, and all that money could procure of rich and rare was put in requisition for the occasion.

I was selected as one of the bridesmaids, and Isabel presented us with bridal dresses, which were of white brocade, embroidered with silver roses.

During the short time which elapsed previous to the marriage, Isabel exhibited almost a child-like joy, which called forth the censure of those who considered such exultation as unwomanly and indelicate.

But the conduct of Major Reeves was perfectly inexplicable.

His moody and restless manner was ill-suited to a bridegroom, and once or twice I caught his eye fixed upon Isabel with an expression of such dark malignity as made me shudder.

One evening we were gathered around a cheerful fire, and the Major, at Isabel's request, had taken up the guitar, when, as he stooped over the instrument, in the act of turning it, his vest fell partly open, and a slender gold chain which he wore about his neck became entangled in the screws.

Not perceiving it, he raised himself suddenly, and by this movement drew from its concealment a small miniature which was attached to the chain.

He at first seemed discomposed, and was about to replace it, but upon hearing Isabel's exclamation of surprise, he turned and held it towards her.

With a trepidation strangely in contrast with her former composure, Isabel eagerly grasped the miniature.

It was the face of a delicate woman, with little beauty, but great sweetness of expression; and as I gazed on it, the features seemed not unfamiliar to me.

With a merry jest, I looked up to demand the name of her whose image thus lay upon the bosom of a bridegroom; but as I did so I caught a glimpse of the same dark, revengeful expression in his countenance, as his eyes fastened, with serpent-like fascination, upon his bride.

Isabel's lips quivered as she returned the picture, and faintly repeated my question.

"It is the image of one whom I have loved as I shall never love again!" replied the Major, passionately. "Of one who is now an angel in heaven—of my wife!"

"Your wife?" exclaimed Isabel.

"Yes, my fair Isabel," said he, while a sneer passed over his lip with the rapidity of lightning. "Had you asked me of my past life, you would have learned that when you were but a babe in the cradle, I was a husband and a father."

Isabel started, but strove to smile as she replied, "I am older than you suppose, Langton. You could scarcely have been wedded so many years ago, or else time has forgotten to trace his characters upon your brow."

The Major smiled ghoulily as he said, "Shall I tell you of my past history, Isabel? Methinks you should learn something of him to whom you have plighted your faith, though prudence would have dictated that such knowledge should have preceded your promise."

There was a half-concealed sarcasm in this remark which cut Isabel to the soul, but she only shuddered, and was silent.

Major Reeves, fixing his eyes upon her agitated countenance, resumed, "I know not what you read upon my brow, Isabel, but it is certainly forty-five years since I saw the light of day.

"My father sent me to Paris for my education, but I soon wearied of books, and sought to study men. A life of adventure, such as rarely falls to the lot of individuals in modern times, has been mine.

"I married when scarcely more than a mere boy. My wife and son are gone to a better world. I am now a lone and solitary man; but there is a debt due to me which you must pay."

His eyes glared fiercely upon her as he spoke; but when Isabel raised her tearful eyes to his face he banished all traces of his emotion as if by a single effort, and with the sweet looks and honied words of lover-like blandishments sought to soothe her troubled feelings.

"Now tell me, Isabel," said he, after a pause, "are you still willing to wed the stranger with, for aught you know, the stamp of Cain on his brow?"

"Yes," replied Isabel, solemnly, as she stooped and pressed her lips to his broad forehead. "If the brand of Cain were written upon that brow in characters of blood, I would not believe your crimes had stamped it there."

For a moment Major Reeves seemed touched and and softened.

"Come, my Isabel, we are growing too serious. Let us seek a gayer theme. Tell me of your early days. Did you never meet one whom you once loved as you now love me?"

"Never!"

"If this little cabinet of yours could be unsealed, Isabel, would it not tell some tales of lovers' vows?" asked Major Reeves, as he laid his hand on the same.

"Look for yourself," said Isabel, smiling, as she touched a spring and opened the cabinet.

Glad that the conversation had taken a gayer turn, I placed the cabinet on the table, and insisted that Isabel should examine and burn her lover-tokens in the presence of her lover.

With a gay laugh, she consented, and as we tossed over many a letter which contained the genuine outpouring of affection, Isabel sketched many an amusing picture of the writer.

We had already given many to the flames, when I took up a bundle of papers tied together and labelled "Poetry."

They were the verses of the unfortunate Claude Randlewood, and fearing lest the painful story should be revived, I hurriedly threw them into Isabel's lap, but not before Major Reeves had seen the handwriting.

As Isabel flung them into the flames, he darted forward and snatched them from the fire.

Seriously alarmed and vexed, Isabel strove to obtain them; but he was as resolute in retaining possession, until, dreading to excite his curiosity by her apparent desire to conceal them, Isabel promised to read them aloud if he would return them.

He placed the scorched papers upon the table, and Isabel, drawing one from the parcel, commenced reading.

But anxious to disarm her betrothed of any suspicion to which her anxiety to secure the papers might have given rise, she paused and drew a most ludicrous picture of her poetical lover.

She depicted his fluidity, his awkwardness, his exaggerated sentiment, his morbid sensibility; and while reading the poem, which happened to be his lament for his mother, she mimicked his gesture and peculiar tones of voice.

Shocked at the cruel mockery of the dead, I looked towards Major Reeves, and the expression of his countenance was almost demoniacal.

Putting his handkerchief to his lip, which was bleeding profusely, for he had almost bitten it through, he pleaded sudden illness, and withdrew; but the papers disappeared with him.

The day was fixed for the wedding, and a large and brilliant party was assembled in the church selected for the ceremony.

The hour came, but not the bridegroom; and after a long wait, the party left the church.

Everything was changed from gaiety to gloom.

Isabel was almost dead with terror. Illness or death, she deemed, would alone detain him, and she sat with clasped hands and dilated eye listening to every foot-fall.

At length a cab was heard driving at full speed to the door, and the next moment Major Reeves entered the house.

Overcome by her agitation, Isabel sprang forward, and threw herself into his arms.

Disengaging himself from her embrace, he led her to a seat, and while we stood in speechless wonder, he walked to the door and locked it; then, returning to his trembling bride, he looked down upon her with an expression I shall never forget, as he exclaimed, "Isabel Le Breton, my revenge is complete! You love me—even now you would forgive the shame I have put upon you and wed your beggared lover! Yes; my debt is paid, and I leave to a life of lingering wretchedness the woman who doomed to the grave of a suicide my beloved son! Listen to me!" continued he, as, with a wild cry, Isabel started from her seat. "Woman, listen to me! He whom your cruelty murdered was my son! When that son was stricken down by you in the midst of his young hopes, I swore to be revenged on his murderess! Isabel, I could have pitied you had you shown one womanly feeling or pitying tenderness towards his memory. I could have pitied you; but no, you *mocked* him whom you had slain! Now go and tell your brilliant assemblage that Isabel Le Breton—the proud, high-born Isabel Le Breton—plighted her faith to the father of the man she killed, and was spurned like a reptile from his path!"

As he uttered these fearful words he strode away, and ere our cries could summon assistance to his wretched victim he had made good his retreat.

The whole house was, of course, a scene of confusion.

Isabel was in hysterics, and we were too much overcome by the shock we had received to use much discretion in our details of the catastrophe.

What became of Isabel?

She never again appeared in society.

Bowed down by shame and sorrow, outraged in her pride as well as her affections, she took refuge in a distant part of the country, and, in strict retirement, endeavoured to conceal her disgrace.

But it was not till time had destroyed her matchless beauty and raised up another generation, to whom the events of her youth were but as legends of olden days, that she could feel herself free from the brand which stamped her fair brow with shame or forget the blight which had fallen upon her young heart.

A Strange Neighbor.

BY S. L.

THE following narrative is a short and truthful account of certain incidents which occurred more than seventy years ago. Descendants of the persons with whom they are connected live to vouch for the truthfulness of this story. For this reason, names have been changed and slight alterations made as were deemed necessary.

With this introduction, we pass on to the story itself.

Early, then, in the present century a gentleman farmer of the name of Francis Asheton was living in the Fen Country with his young wife and family. The nearest village to his house was called Westdyke, and it lay three miles away as the crow flies.

The distance by road was nearly double, but in the winter, when the floods were out, it could be reached easily by boat across the submerged pastures.

Two miles from The Grange, as Mr. Asheton's house was called, stood a queer old-fashioned house known in the neighborhood as "The Warp." It could only be seen from The Grange, for there was not so much as half a knoll's slope in the intervening ground; nothing but smooth pastures and broad trenches lay between.

The families at the two houses had always been good friends, being dependent, as folks are in lonely districts, on one another for society.

But the last head of the old Skipwood family, who had lived at The Warp for untold generations, died without sons to succeed him, and his wife and daughter went away to live at Norwich, and tried to get a tenant for the house.

This was no easy matter, for The Warp was in bad repair, and did not possess many advantages, having only a small acreage.

At length, however, the house was let. News of this event was brought to the Ashetons by a man named Joel, who was the cowkeeper. He had noticed smoke curling up from the queer old chimneys at The Warp, and hastened to bring news of this fact to his mistress, who had dearly loved a gossip.

Mightily well pleased was she to hear that they were no longer neighborless, and immediately interpreted the sight of the rising smoke as a good omen, in her own simple fashion.

"If the smoke rises blue and steadily, as Joel saw it," she said, "it means that all goes well and cheerily in the new household, and if that is the first sign you have of a neighbor's coming, you may be sure that he is friendly-disposed and hospitable."

Her husband laughed at her as a sham prophetess.

"Easy it is to guess that things go cheer-

ily, when one is all in a bustle with getting settled," he said, merrily. "And, as for the friendliness, it isn't very likely that any man would shut his door against a neighbor in these lonely parts."

Events, however, soon belied the good dame's interpretation.

As was natural enough in a man of an open, genial, disposition, Mr. Asheton lost no time in going to offer his services to his neighbors; and his good wife, whose powers of persuasion were still as strong as they were in the days of her courtship, must needs take it into her head to go along with him.

She took care to carry with her a basket well stored with butter, eggs, a pullet ready for roasting, a cake, and some home-made jam, and away she went in the bright, spring sun.

"How about the smoke to-day, little wife?" said her husband, for it was coming out very black in an easterly direction.

"The smoke must go where the sweet westerly wind sends it," she answered, laughing; "and the blacker it is, the better the fire on the hearth."

They drove up to the low gate that led into the garden of The Warp, tied up the horse, for they preferred (keeping up their lover-like fancies) to be alone when they went on a jaunt, and walked up to the familiar doorway.

Everything about the place wore a very neglected appearance. There was neither knocker nor bell to the door, and Mr. Asheton was forced to use his knuckles on the stout oak. This proving of no avail in awakening a response, he fetched his whip, and used the butt-end of it manfully. But he hammered enough, his wife declared, to [illegible] the inhabitants of the Enchanted Palace.

They looked at the windows, and, greatly to the astonishment of Mrs. Asheton, who wondered how such a strange circumstance [illegible] her [illegible] was [illegible] Mr. Asheton; "[illegible] perhaps they have not arrived yet," she [illegible] disappointed, but not yet cast down.

"What about the smoke?" retorted her husband; but she did not laugh this [illegible]

It is no small matter to a sociable, kind-hearted little woman, who has set her heart on making an afternoon call in the country, to find her hosts out or disinclined for her visit; and her husband seeing she took the matter to heart more than there was any need for, ceased joking her.

They turned away at last, and Mrs. Asheton was just preparing to mount into the little pony trap, when her capacious basket caught her eye.

She seized it with hands, and running up to the inhospitable door once more, deposited it on the stone step outside. When she reached the gate again she was breathless.

Her husband helped her up into the trap, and then chid her gently for carrying such a heavy load before he came to help her.

"Oh, it's not that," she cried, panting all the time; "only, as I was coming away, the shutters opened a little, and I saw such a pretty, sweet-looking girl peep out, and then somebody from behind pulled her away. It was all quick as thought."

Mrs. Asheton went home full of wonderment at this strange visit, and for weeks after plied all her servants, and everyone whom she could lay hold of, near and far, with questions about the inhabitants of The Warp.

Nobody could tell her anything; even the letter-carrier, in whom lay her last hope, could give no help.

"No letters ever come to the Warp now," he said, mournfully, remembering the generous hospitality he had been wont to receive from its old inmates.

Mr. Asheton made many other attempts to do his duty as a good neighbor to the new-comers, but all in vain. On the last occasion he found the outer gate carefully tied up with strong ropes; and after this he gave up the attempt to be neighborly as hopeless.

His wife was not baffled yet. She wrote to the Skipwoods, and in the course of her letter asked the name of the new tenants. The answer came back in due time—"Mr. and Mrs. Ambrose Everingham." The Skipwoods knew nothing of them; they believed them to be well-to-do, even wealthy, and they came from the West of [illegible]

One Sunday, late in the autumn, when the land was flooded all around the village of Westdyke, Mr. Asheton and his wife were forced to go to church part of the way by water.

Mrs. Asheton came out from the service in a great excitement.

"Francis," she whispered, as soon as decorum would allow her to turn away from the greetings of the Westdyke acquaintance, "they are here."

"Who are 'they'?" answered her husband.

"Why, The Warp people, of course, and I mean to speak to them."

"Nonsense," was his answer; but the next moment he saw his wife holding out her hand to a lovely young woman, and [illegible]

"You are a near neighbor of mine."

Beside the girl stood a handsome man of about forty years of age; he was not tall, but very strongly built.

The girl left her hand in Mrs. Asheton's, and looked inquiringly at her companion.

Mrs. Asheton continued—

"You are Mr. Everingham, I think?" and she made a graceful curtsey to the gentleman.

"That is my name, Madam, but yours is unknown to me, nor do I desire to be enlightened."

Mr. Asheton turned furiously angry at an insult to his wife, and it is probable that, had the scene not taken place in a church yard, the insult would not have passed unavenged.

As it was, he drew his wife away, feeling, for the first time in his life, angry with her.

"See what your curiosity has brought on you," he said.

"Ah, Francis, it was not curiosity; I only wondered how they would get home. They had no boat, and the waters are out, and that poor girl will have to walk back all the way round by Eastdyke."

"So she will, poor thing," said Mr. Asheton, thoughtfully; "but you see, wife, they don't want us. It's all very well to render services, but it never does to force them on people."

"I am sure that girl is unhappy—miserably unhappy," replied Mrs. Asheton. "And man looks wicked."

"Your fancy, wife, he is only proud, reserved, and—insolent."

* * * * * *

Next morning, while Mr. and Mrs. Asheton were breakfasting, a knock was heard at the door.

According to their custom, they did not rise, but simply called out, "Come in."

What was their astonishment when the tenant of The Warp walked in! His demeanor was entirely different from that of the previous d

He bowed courteously, and accepted the seat they offered him.

"Have you a Bible?" he inquired, eagerly, turning to Mr. Asheton.

"Surely," replied the host, rising, and taking down his large Bible from a shelf in the room.

"I want to look at it."

He took the book, rose, went to the window seat, and sitting in its deep recess with the book on his knees, appeared to study it attentively, searching backwards and forwards, marking places, comparing passages, then, with much show of impatience, closing the book sharply.

"Can I help you?" inquired Mr. Asheton, approaching him.

"I want a verse—the last verse in one book, but I can't remember the verse, only I know it's the last one in the book."

"You can't remember even one word?"

"Not one."

"Then why trouble to find that particular one?" asked Mrs. Asheton.

"It haunts me—it haunts me," he said. "I must find it."

"Let us look at all the books in turn," said Mr. Asheton, who sympathized with his guest's dislike of being baffled.

So they took the book, and looked straight through it together; but Mr. Everingham declared that the verse he wanted was not to be seen.

"I know it's there; I'm certain of it."

"Perhaps you'll remember just a word of it, and, so, come again; or, if you prefer it, I can lend you a Bible."

"Can't Mrs. Everingham remember it?" inquired Mrs. Asheton.

"I haven't asked her; but she wouldn't if she could," he replied, angrily. "Thank you, I'm much obliged;" and so saying, he went away.

Directly after, Mr. Asheton too went out, bound on business some distance away, and when he came in, he was very tired, and slept in the chimney-corner until bed-time, much to his wife's disappointment, for she wanted to talk over their strange morning visitor.

Our fore-fathers, especially those who were country-bred, were much more regular and sensible in their habits than their degenerate descendants. By nine o'clock at the latest, the whole Asheton household had retired to rest for the night. Mr. Asheton's drowsiness, consequent on the fatigues of the day, caused him to fall asleep at once, and to sleep soundly until an hour before midnight. At that time he awoke with a start, and sat up as if listening anxiously. Then he rose and began hurriedly to put on his clothes.

"Is anything the matter with the children?" asked Mrs. Asheton, drowsily.

"Are you awake, wife? Then listen. Something, I know not what, tells me I am wanted at The Warp. I am going to ride there at once, and take Joel with me; he is strong and trusty," he added, as if to himself.

His wife, naturally much alarmed, entreated him with tears not to go, fearing she knew not what. Mr. Asheton however would not be dissuaded; and rousing the man Joel, and himself saddling the horses while Joel got ready, they were soon riding to The Warp at a smart pace.

When they had gone only a little way, a bright gleam lit, or close to the house, burst upon their sight.

"Fire!" exclaimed Mr. Asheton, in great excitement, urging his horse on.

"That fire in the yard, master," answered Joel.

"Why should there be a fire this time of night?"

"I don't know: they keep no servants there now. Perhaps they do work at night they'd rather not do by day," replied Joel, mysteriously.

"What do you mean?"

"Well, master, I know you think your own thoughts about things—and so do I."

"I suppose you think there may be witchcraft afoot?"

"If there be," replied Joel, "I'm thinking you and I can tackle the wizard, [illegible]"

After a pause, during which nothing was heard except the sound of their horses' hoofs on the smooth, flat road, Mr. Asheton exclaimed again—

"Joel, what do you see?"

"A figure of a man moving to and fro between the woodstack in the yard and in the fire."

"He is piling up the fire."

"That is he, and so close to the house, that I'm thinking, if we're not quicker, Dame Skipwood will be poorer to-morrow by the rent of 'The Warp.'"

"Joel!"

"Ay?"

"Let us leave the road, and trot along the [illegible]"

They left the road, and trotted softly on the fields in which a month before the gleaners had a merry time.

"Joel, put spurs to your horse, or we shall be too late for—Heaven alone knows!"

They entered furiously on over the stubby fields, and tied up their horses to The Warp gateway; then Mr. Asheton led the way quickly and stealthily round to the yard which lay at the back of the [illegible]

The fire in the yard was blazing high by this time. The man once more went to the woodstack, and lifting a huge log, flung it on the fire. Mr. Asheton and his man stood beneath the shelter of a high hedge which skirted the side of the yard next to the road.

The man, whom Mr. Asheton now recognised as his visitor of the morning, had his back to them as he stood before the fire.

The fire was built so close to the house that the flames leaping up threatened to catch the rude beams which projected from the low, slanting roof.

As the tenant of The Warp stood before the fire, he rubbed his hands gleefully, and then entered the house by the kitchen door, close to which the fire blazed.

As he retreated, Mr. Asheton signed to Joel, and they moved softly forward, and stood one on either side of the woodstack, where they could see, without being seen.

A low, wailing cry from the house broke upon their ears, then they heard the fall as of a human body on the brick floor of the kitchen.

Joel would have sprung forward, but his master, looking round from his corner of the woodstack, warned him back.

The next moment they saw a sight which made the blood run cold in their veins.

The man reappeared, carrying in his arms a slender woman, clothed in a white wrapper, her hands bound together, her black hair falling in loose masses over her white gown. She was motionless and unresisting as one dead.

The man who bore her paused in the doorway, looked earnestly at her, and cried passionately—

"Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful! Oh, but the verse—the verse!"

And then he strode forward and stood in front of the fire, raised his arms, and—the next moment he was pinioned from behind, while his light burden fell to the ground.

Mr. Asheton and Joel wrestled hard with their prisoner, whose strength seemed to be extraordinary for a man of his size; but at length they overpowered him, and succeeded in binding him fast.

Then Mr. Asheton looked into his eyes.

"A raving lunatic!" he exclaimed.

They picked up the poor senseless girl, and Mr. Asheton carried her into the house, and after a long time succeeded in restoring her to consciousness, but she swooned away again and again.

Their captive, strange to say, offered no further resistance. Probably he was cunningly watching for a chance of escape.

Soon after daybreak, the sound of wheels on the road was gladly welcomed by the watchers.

They had not dared to leave the house for a moment. Attention to the madman, the fainting girl, and the extinction of the fire had kept both men fully employed.

Mr. Asheton sent a message to the doctor at the County Asylum, some dozen miles away, and later in the morning found a messenger to send to his wife.

Great was Mrs. Asheton's relief to receive tidings of her husband; the broken night had indeed been full of terrors for her.

She came at once, and fetched away the unhappy girl to her own dear home.

Everingham, now a hopeless lunatic, was placed under restraint, and with the extraordinary vitality which is such a terrible feature in lunacy, lived to be an aged man.

His young wife, tenderly cared for by the Ashetons, was shortly after taken home by her relations.

Neither she nor Mr. Asheton could account for the strange and merciful manner in which he had been summoned to her [illegible]

He described the impulse to go as one beyond all power of resistance; but no commonplace explanations of the impulse could be found, and it only remains as one of the numerous instances of the saying that Truth is often stranger than Fiction.

WOMEN AND THE WEED.—The French home-keeper delights in her after-dinner cigarette. The senora of Barcelona loves in the evening to wrap her black crape around her head, and while gently puffing her long tobacco cigarette, to cast heart-thrilling glances from her balcony above the walks of the wights below. While the [illegible] even cigar, and the Russian wife is not far behind her in her enjoyment of the weed, and even the Japanese, Chinese, Tartar, Dutch, and Soudanese wives all like to let tobacco smoke curl from their pretty mouths.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

All the trains of the Lehigh Valley Railroad between New York and Easton are now equipped with apparatus for telegraphing while in motion. The operator's office is in the baggage car, where is also the apparatus for carrying the current by induction to the wires along the road. Western Union rates and ten cents additional are charged for this service. The system will be put in operation over the entire Lehigh Valley line, and other railways are negotiating with the Consolidated Company for the adoption of the induction system.

"The Mud Store" is a term applied to a retail shoe store in a Western town. The enterprising proprietor of this place hit upon the scheme of buying a large stock of cheap goods, loading them in a loose pile in a team, besmearing a part of the lot with mud, and then having them exhibited all over the town as damaged goods that must be sold at any price. The idea was profitable for a time, and people swarmed to the store to get something for almost nothing as they thought. After a time buyers found that they were the victims of a humbug. The "Mud Store" suddenly closed up, to the relief of honest dealers.

An enterprising coachman has been tr[illegible] open in Boston. He was left in charge of his employer's stable at the country residence. The family and servants on a trip to Europe excepting the latter, and as he was an expert [illegible] and a lover of horses, got [illegible] the coachman thought he might safely accept the horses for his business. He accordingly provided himself with a carriage and used the horses, taking care to feed and shoe them at the owner's expense. Shortly, however, he ran across a passenger, an acquaintance of his employer, who recognized the animals, and who conveyed the news of the use to which they were being put to the owner. The coachman is now open for another position.

The American turkey as an article of export is rapidly forcing itself into the good graces of the London market, where it is now welcomed at a figure somewhere between $4 and $5 per head. The industry of shipping our surplus turkeys to European markets began in good earnest about one year ago, and as an indication of how rapid and substantial the development of this [illegible] trade has been, the [illegible], which sailed from New York the other [illegible] of selected turkeys, to be conveyed from Liverpool to the London market by lightning express delivery. It is expected that similar transatlantic shipments will be made by every steamer leaving this port during the winter months.

A noted St. Louis detective says that burglars and thieves, as a general rule, do not carry concealed weapons, for the reason that they know they are liable at any time to be taken in on general principles, and they can be sent to jail very easily if a knife or pistol is found on them. Carrying weapons is not fashionable with crooks of any kind. Most [illegible] of this kind are [illegible] who carry weapons as a [illegible] [illegible] without [illegible] [illegible] are caught [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Our Young Folks.

CARELESS NED.

BY EDITH CUTHELL.

"NOW then, you blind mole, what are you doing?"

This not very polite speech was addressed to Edward Grant by his elder brother Jack—Careless Ned is what those who knew him called him, and with good reason, as the adventures of one day will bear witness.

Well, he was always knocking over people and things, and they were knocking him over, according to circumstances, as if he were the proverbially blind animal his brother called him.

This morning he was tearing through the hall, hurry-scurry in hot haste, when lo! he must needs catch his foot in the tail of Jack's kite, and stumble along till the tail broke, just saving his nose from a meeting with Mother Earth.

"Well, 'tisn't my fault if people will get into my way," was the lame retort from Master Ned.

"People, you donkey!—a kite isn't people, is it?" returned not over polite Jack to his brother.

"Well, people's things, I mean. If people and their things would keep out of my way I should be all right."

"I tell you what it is, young man, you think of number one too much, and let the number two, and the number threes, and the number everybodies go scot free, you selfish fellow."

Well, there might have been a spice of truth in what Jack said, still he need not have been quite so hard. Ned was not, perhaps, more selfish than other youngsters of nine or thereabouts.

"Well, I'm told not to mind other people's business," grumbled he, as in self-defence, "and 'tis other people's business made me tear your kite."

"Fangs!! Whose?"

Jack could be very lofty and scornful when he chose, though this was not very often.

"Father's—he told me to take a note for him, though 'tis a jolly enough note, I think."

"Get along with your excuses—you'll never be hung for want of making an excuse."

So saying, Jack bent moodily over his tattered kite, and Ned sauntered forth.

"Well, I'm always in hot water with somebody, and all through other folk's faults. Now, if father hadn't given me this note to deliver I shouldn't have been in a hurry, and it's on that precious kite," soliloquized Master Ned, sitting down on a bank beside the fish-pond, on his way to think things over; and indeed he was in the street, behaving like a true specimen of his usual hap-hazard fashion.

Well, he hadn't gone far enough, but just before him was a grocer's boy, his basket on his arm, his elbow dug into his side, his nose in the air, whistling to his heart's content, little dreaming of the nearness of Master Ned to him, so like a steam-boy in his movements.

Whistle, whistle, trudge, trudge, and lo! there was a collision. Master grocer's boy tripped over from the last-comer behind and down went his basket, his basket cut another, and its contents went flying about as to the four winds.

"Ha—ha—ha!" so laughed the street urchins—it was so comic, so laughably ludicrous to all, save the grocer's boy, who spun around at last to see who had upset him, after rescuing his parcels.

"You great stupid donkey! Why don't you look where you're going," cried he in disgust, addressing our hero.

"I beg your pardon, but it was your own fault," was Ned's mild response; "you should have got out of my way."

"I hadn't eyes behind me, had I, you ninny?" was the indignant reply. "You'll get your ears boxed one of these days."

"You'll get your tongue snipped for a saucy one," said Ned.

And, this difficulty ended, he tramped on, wondering at the strange view people took of their own doings.

Why, ah! here he was in another mess, as he himself said afterwards, which was literally figuratively true, for he was running slap bang into a sweep's machine, like a hair caught in a furze-bush.

"Ya-a-w!" cried he in ungentlemanly surprise at finding himself in such an ungenteelly position.

"Well, you must be as blind as a bat, youngster, to come up again me like that," grinned the sweep, who thought he had the best of the situation, Master Ned almost dancing a hornpipe to keep his equilibrium.

"No, you're wrong: you're the blind bat. I'll not be called names by anybody, nor be poked about by such stupid black things," gasped Ned, rubbing his face with his pocket-handkerchief, and very indignant.

"Who do you call a stupid black thing, me or my machine?" questioned the aggrieved sweep, laying his black hand on the boy's shoulder in a manner that was anything but pleasant to Ned.

"Y-your machine," faltered he, less pointedly.

"Very well, so far, seein' the machine don't understand sauce; but let me tell you, young sir, that black thing have earned a breakfast for his master this morning, that's more'n you've done, I'm thinkin'," said the sweep, loosening his grip on the boy's arm.

"I've no master," snapped he, and went tearing on.

"That's a pert youngster," mused the sweep, eyeing him over his shoulder.

"Well, if I get many more interruptions I shall never deliver this note, and I want to make haste, too, to play that little game with Will Gray—fathers never think of their sons' engagements."

Whew! here he was in another net, trap, or something catching him by the legs; and he was making up for lost time, and in such a hurry?

What was it? He was like some great unwary fly in the toils of a wily spider's web. How he floundered—how something yelled—not a spider, laughing at his captive. No, nothing so pleasant as that—a spider's laugh!

No, this was some small animal crying out as if in indignant pain; and out of the chaos of his tumbling, his tottering came a shrill girlish voice, saying—

"You great rude, stupid boy!"

"Ah! well, rude, more rude, most rude, that is how the scale of comparison ran, as he toppled, floundered, and wondered where he was.

It seemed quite a little age, instead of a few brief moments, that he capered, as in indecision whether he should keep his feet or fall, and so end the uncertainty.

"Head or tail," cried a wag of a lad, watching the fun around a corner.

Ah, tail it was, if falling meant tail, for down he went on hands and knees, like a giddy baby learning to walk. His hat flew from him, as if ashamed of him; a small poodle of a dog gave a drowning yelp, dancing a hornpipe like a performing monkey, its leash flying out of somebody's hand, and playing "catch who can" in the air.

Somebody was a very determined-looking girl with an umbrella, and seeing our fat on hero snug on Mother Earth's bosom, thought fit to teach him a lesson not to limber over poodles and their mistresses again, and enact such vulgar street scenes for the general amusement.

Thwack! thwack! thwack! so she gave it to him in no lady-like fashion.

"Hold there, hold! Nobody but a woman would hit a man when he's down!" cried Ned.

"I'm no man, and you're no woman!" returned the peppery young lady, her ideas a little confused by the state of affairs.

"True, ma'am, true. Hip, hip, hooray!" roared a street boy.

With the sound of the cheer our careless one arose, and looked about for his false front and hat.

"Well, what do you say for yourself?" asked the maiden, gathering her pet into her arms, as for safety from that horrid boy.

"I'm sorry that your dog should have played me such a trick, and that you should have thwacked me, as if you really thought 'twere my fault," said Ned, with a flourish of his hat.

"It was you played the trick; my poor dog could help nothing! You know that very well!"

Ned winced at having to bear the blame, the thrashing, to say nothing of his sore knees from his fall.

"No; and if he were a human being I should make you beg his pardon!" returned the girl.

"Make, make!" muttered Ned to himself; but the young lady heard him.

"Yes, make! And you'll be made to keep your eyes in front of you some day, or you'll smart for it."

With this the indignant young lady walked on, Ned following the same way, but keeping wisely in the middle of the street, which, as it was not market day, gave him ample scope for his careless way of walking.

Well, that tumble over the poodle seemed to jumble up things in the boy's brain; he found that little game of his with Will Gray came first, and the delivering of his father's note, which was his as well, as it happened, stood in the background of his memory.

So it happened that, the game over, he cantered home just as dinner was the order of the day, and all hands aloft in the house, the note still in his pocket.

"Well, old dusty poll," cried Jack, sauntering in behind him from a morning's kite flying, "where did you lie last?"

"It is no business of yours where I lay last, nor where I shall lie next," returned he airily, as if gifted with second sight, foreknowledge, or like, which he was not.

"Why, Master Ned, do go up and make yourself decent for dinner; one would think you had been rolling in the dust, like old Ned, the donkey," said a servant, whisking by him with a dish in her hand, and putting him at arm's length with her disengaged one, knowing his propensity.

"Something in the name, you know," laughed Jack, ably.

"I didn't make my name, did I?"

"Make, no; your forte is unmaking, and knocking folk about: out of this week into next, you know. But you haven't told me where you lay last."

"I'll not tell you, nor where I shall lie next."

A second time these words were spoken like a very sneer. Then both boys separated, for the dinner-bell was now commencing to ring.

Ned ran upstairs to the landing; then thrusting his hand into a pocket, he remembered the note he had not delivered; there it lay in his pocket.

Ah! careless, careless Ned! When people mount up to the landings above they ought to remember that the stairs are still behind them, even though they find themselves in a fix, with their father's undelivered note in their pocket, and a note they think they themselves have no especial interest in.

Back, back, back—why what was the lad bent on doing, breaking his neck? Very much like it. Well would it have been had his eyes been behind him, for then he would have seen that he was verging on the stairs, on the very brink.

Was the smarting time the girl had spoken of so short a while before come upon him?

Now he was tottering, falling, hurling down, down, backward, down the giddy heights; nay, he turned face foremost in his flight—ay, it was flight, it was so airy, so unreal; but there he lay at the bottom, on the floor of the hall, a poor, huddled-up, unconscious heap—that is where he lay next.

Ay, there he lay, a spectacle for all the frightened household to come and gaze at, to gather up and carry to his bed; poor Careless Ned caught at last.

"Well, the doctor has him in his clutches with a vengeance now," spoke Jack to Will Gray. "He's plastered his nob, set his broken arm, and bound up his twisted ankle. But, I say, 'twas a near shave that he came off with his life."

"Ah! he was always a careless dog!" ejaculated Will.

This Ned heard spoken under his window, while he seemed to be lying propped up in a chair, his father beside him—his poor head bandaged, his arm in a sling, and he himself saying in repentant tones—

"Father, I forgot to take your note, and that—that made me fall."

"Careless, yes, he's getting to be quite a street nuisance; no end of a disturbance he's made this morning. First, he knocked over Fig, the grocer's boy, and his precious basket, I hear. Old Fig came to father and made his complaint. Then, no sooner was he gone than up came a mincing young miss and her poodle, to lodge a like grievance against poor haphazard Ned. No doubt there would have been a rod in pickle for him, but for this tumble downstairs. It seems that he was walking on his head when he upset my lady's poodle."

"Oh, what a fib!" Ned tried his best to say, but his tongue was as if a nightmare held it in bondage; it could only frame words, not utter them.

"And then," went on Jack, "to crown all a sweep with his brush came by grinning in his sleeve——"

"Heedlessness lies at the bottom of all, my son, carelessness in other people's matters, over other people's comfort," came like a real voice setting aside a phantom one. "But you've lost a rare pleasant day, for the note was to accept an invitation for you all to a juvenile lawn-tennis party next week, at Mr. Lane's, and now you will——"

"Get up, you lazy fellow—you'll never be the Queen's errand boy if this is the way you go errands. Why, here are Lizzie and Alice Lane, come for yes or nay to the lawn-tennis party next week, and you have yes in your pocket, and too lazy to deliver it."

It was Ned's brother Jack who spoke, thumping and bumping him out of a sound nap by the fish-pond.

"Why, I thought I'd tumbled downstairs, and——"

"Tumbled downstairs—tumble up and down on your knees again, and beg two fair ladies' pardon for contempt of—of an invitation. Don't lie there yawning like an ape."

So Ned had been napping, and when he told his dream, Jack said he was true to his name, sleeping or waking, and Careless Ned he should be still in the days to come.

LANCE MERVYN.

BY M. F.

"TAKE me too, Lance?" begged little Wilfred Clark, looking up in his cousin's face pleadingly.

Lance Mervyn shook his head as he lifted his straw hat from a peg, and prepared for a ramble with his dog "Punch."

"I am going too far, Will, and the sun is too hot for you."

"Why not for you, then?" sharply inquired the little fellow.

"Oh," said Lance, carelessly sauntering down the terrace, "I'm twelve, you see, and you're only seven."

Wilfred turned away disappointed, and not convinced, while his cousin quickly crossed a stile and struck into a meadow, where the foot-path lay under the shade of tall elm-trees.

It was ten o'clock when they started, and by eleven they had reached a quiet field, at one side of which flowed a cool, tempting little backwater of the river.

Lance was on a visit to this part of the country for the first time, and was spending his summer holidays with an aunt and uncle, the parents of little Wilfred.

His dog had accompanied him from home a week before, and was his constant companion.

"How I should like a dip, Punch!" said Lance, looking longingly at the water; and Punch wagged his tail encouragingly, for he did not know that it was not safe for Lance to bathe in the river.

"This isn't the river," said the boy to himself; "it's a quiet little stream right away from it, and as still as our duck-pond. I will have a dip—I know how to swim, and it's all right!"

Having made himself feel sure that he was doing no harm, Master Lance soon pulled off his clothes, and telling Punch to keep them safe, he plunged into the cool smooth water.

It was quite shallow where he went in, and Lance found a few strokes of swimming as easy as possible.

But presently his body moved more quickly, and he felt that a swift undercurrent was carrying him forward—while far ahead he could distinguish that the backwater ended in a mill, the wheel of which was moving busily.

Lance felt a thrill of fear. His power over his limbs was gone, and he was being carried swiftly onward.

In desperation, he seized some thin branches of willow, and clung to them, while he shouted "Help!" with all his strength.

It seemed almost hopeless—and how many thoughts fled through the boy's mind! His hands clinging with desperate strength, the rush of the water sounding loud in his ears, he felt insensibility stealing over him.

"Hold fast, master!" shouted a man's voice, and a punt was pushed, as quickly as the stream would allow, close into the bank which Lance had vainly tried to reach.

A man from the mill reached out his arm and grasped Lance's hand, then drew him into the punt, where the poor boy sank back white and senseless. His deliverer threw his own coat over Lance, and took him quickly down the stream to the mill, where he made fast the punt, and called to a woman and boy to help him lift the young stranger into their cottage.

After a short time, and much hard rubbing, Lance came to himself, and then the woman bade her son run and find the lad's clothes.

Away went Johnnie, and presently he saw the clothes on the bank, with Punch sitting on them.

"Good dog!" said Johnnie, pleasantly, and making an effort to draw near the clothes.

Punch looked steadily at the stranger—so steadily that Johnnie saw any nearer approach would probably end in his being bitten.

So Johnnie ran back to the cottage, and told them he had found the clothes, but a dog was sitting on them, and would'nt let him touch them.

Lance could not help a smile here.

"How shall I manage?" he said. "I must get back, or my aunt will be so very frightened."

"Well, Johnnie, fetch your Sunday clothes," said the woman. "Now, young gentleman, you slip these on while I ask my good man if he'll take you down in the punt to where the clothes lie."

She left the room, and Lance stepped out of the blanket they had put round him, and into very strange garments directly.

"I don't believe Punch will know me!" he said to himself, as he noticed the shortness of his borrowed trousers and the thickness of the hob-nailed boots.

"They be a bit small for you," said the woman, with a smile, as she returned; "but the master's ready with the punt, so come along."

Well, they soon arrived at the spot where the faithful dog now sat up listening.

"Punch! good Punch!" called Lance, and waited. How the dog barked for joy as the punt brought the master with a rescued one once more!

"I suppose I may help myself to my clothes?" said Lance, laughing as he called his dog to him, and the man waited while his son's clothes were exchanged for Lance's proper garments.

Lance felt so giddy and strange when he started on his long homeward walk that I doubt if he could ever have reached his aunt's house on foot; but most fortunately he chose the high road this time instead of the fields, and was overtaken by the kind old doctor of the parish, who drove him the remainder of the way home, and administered a great many cautions as to bathing in strange places.

Little Wilfred listened with very round eyes to the story of Lance's mishaps, and finally said contentedly—

"It is a good thing you didn't take me!"

"Rather," said Lance; and he went away to lie down.

Next day his mother arrived. Mrs. Mervyn had been written to, for the aunt feared Lance might have caught a chill, and thought it better for his mother to know of the accident, although the boy appeared none the worse.

In the night he became very feverish and the doctor ordered him to be kept quite quiet in bed.

A few days after Mrs. Mervyn's arrival she expressed a wish to go and thank the poor people who had been the means of saving her son.

What was her surprise when she found that the woman had been a servant of her father's years before, in a distant country rectory!

"Oh, ma'am," said the poor woman, with a delighted face, "I wondered who the young gentleman minded me of! He is just your very image!"

From that time many acts of kindness were shown to the family at the mill, and two years later Johnnie Grant—the lad who had lent his clothes—was engaged to help in the garden at Lance's home, and became a devoted servant of the family.

MONKEYS in Eastern countries are said to acquire such a fondness for opium that they will habitually smoke any that may be left in the pipe when the master lays it down, and when deprived of it will suffer from nervousness and depression. However, they will not smoke cigarettes. A monkey may be unclean in his personal habits and his moral standing may also be very low, but he draws the line at cigarettes.

BOYS who go skating upon the first white frost, are pretty certain to furnish an item to the newspapers. But the drawback is they seldom do it but once.

INCOMPLETENESS.

BY C. G. PURLEY.

Not he who first beholds the aloe grow,
May think to gaze upon its perfect flower.
He tends, he hopes; but ere the blossom blow,
There needs a century of sun and shower.

He shall not see the product of his toil;
Yet were his work neglected or ill-done,
Did he not prune the boughs and dig the soil,
That perfect blossom ne'er might meet the sun.

Perhaps he has no prescience of its hue,
Nought of its form and fragrance can foretell;
Yet in each sun-shaft, in each bead of dew,
Faith, passing knowledge, tells him he does well.

Our lives, O fellow-men! pass even so.
We watch and toil, and with no seeming gain;
The future, which no mortal may foreknow,
May prove our labor was not all in vain.

But what we sow we may not hope to reap,
Perfect fruition may not seek to win;
Not till, work-weary, we have fallen asleep,
Shall blossom blow, or fruit be gathered in.

Let it be so. Upon our darkened eyes
A light more pure than noontide rays shall shine,
If pain of ours have helped our race to rise,
By just one hair's-breadth, nearer the divine.

Upward and outward, plant-like, life extends;
Grows fairer as it doth the more aspire;
Never completed, evermore it sends
A branch out, striving higher still and higher.

Because so great, it must be incomplete,
Have endless possibilities of growth,
Strength to grow stronger, sweetness still more sweet,
Yearning towards God, Who is the source of both.

A SET OF SPOONS.

The earliest spoons were doubtless made of wood, a hollowed improvement upon John Chinaman's chopstick. These, in their turn were supplemented and displaced by spoons of bone and horn, from whence we get the proverbial expression as to making the spoon or spoiling the horn. Then came spoons of tin or iron, of rough and inelegant shape, and hammered by hand, such as may still be seen in many a humble, rural kitchen.

In the prosperous Tudor times, the precious metals became more plentiful, and gold and silver plate was in such demand that every family had its own goldsmith. Of this there is abundant mention.

In the following century came the Great English Rebellion, that epoch which wrought such havoc among the mediæval art treasures of England; and to none of them was it so disastrous as to the plate of the period. For, as the struggle dragged its weary length, and men and money were sadly in need, the partisans of King and Parliament flung their silver plate—spoons, cups, salvers—into the melting-pot, to provide bread and equip troops. Thus, spoons antecedent to this period are extremely rare.

Perhaps the most curious, and certainly the most singular, variety of spoons is that known as the Apostle spoon. These are to be found, a trap for the unwary, exhibited in many dealers' windows; but, alas for their honesty! are very rarely genuine. An original Apostle spoon is so rare that it needs small advertisement, and can be readily disposed of without the aid of public exhibition.

The first mention of a spoon ornamented by a figure occurs in a will dated 1446, this one having the image of the Virgin. These became common in the sixteenth century, and were known as maiden-head spoons.

Apostle spoons are seldom found before 1500, but they were very popular for a century and a half after. It was the custom for sponsors to present them to their god-children, a wealthy person giving a complete set; others one or two; and the poor, a single spoon. The particular saint represented would be either the "patron saint" of the donor or the namesake of the child. A full set of twelve would now probably sell for $5,000.

Only two sets of thirteen are mentioned. One of them is in the possession of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, England, and is of the year 1560-7. The thirteenth spoon represents St. Paul, and is the oldest, being of the year 1518-16. The other set represents our Lord and His twelve apostles, Matthias taking the place of Judas Iscariot.

It may interest our readers to give a list of the emblems to be found on Apostle spoons, as a means of identifying the apostles represented: St James the Less, a fuller's bat; St. Peter, a key; St. James the Greater, a pilgrim's staff and gourd, bottle, or scrip; sometimes a hat with escallop shell; St. Paul, one or two swords; St. Thomas, a spear; sometimes a builder's rule; St. Matthias, an axe or halderd; St. Andrew, a saltire cross; St. Simon Zelotes, a long saw; St. Matthew, a wallet, or an axe and spear; St. John, a cup (the cup of sorrow); The Saviour or Master, an orb and cross; St. Philip, a long staff, a double cross, or small cross, or basket of fish; St. Jude, a cross, club, or carpenter's square; St. Bartholomew, a butcher's knife. Towards the end of the seventeenth century the custom of presenting these spoons died out.

We have mentioned the Civil War as a great destroyer of early English spoons, but a still greater destruction occured in the reign of William III., for at that time bullion was so scarce, and, in consequence, the price paid by the Government for hall-marked silver was so high, that it actually paid handsomely to melt down plate into ingots! Sets of spoons became, therefore, almost unknown, and it was the custom for each guest to bring his own fork and spoon. It is probable that from hence arose the custom of the baptismal gift of a knife, fork, and spoon.

A Milanese friar wrote, about 1290, a curious versified manual of "Fifty Courtesies for the Table". He gives the following instructions as to the polite use of the spoon:

"Suck not with the mouth when thou eatest with a spoon. Keep thy spoon if thy plate is removed for the adding of some viands: if the spoon is in the plate it puts out the helper. . . . If thou art eating with a spoon, thou must not stuff too much bread into the victuals. He who lays it on thick upon the cooked meats is distasteful to those who are eating beside him." From this it is manifest that but one spoon was used throughout the meal.

WHAT is more reasonable than that they who take pains for anything, should get most in that particular for which they take pains? They have taken pains for power, you for right principles; they for riches, you for a proper use of the appearance of things. See whether they have the advantage of you in that for which you have taken pains, and which they neglect. If they are in power, and you not, why will not you speak the truth to yourself, that you do nothing for the sake of power, but that they do everything? No; but since I take care to have right principles, it is more reasonable that I should have power. Yes, in respect to what you take care about, your principles; but give up to others the things in which they have taken more care than you; else it is just as if, because you have right principles, you should think it fit that when you shoot an arrow you should hit the mark better than an archer, or that you should forge better than a smith.

Grains of Gold.

Gain a little knowledge every day.

Make few promises, and speak the truth.

Charity—gently to hear, kindly to judge.

Humility is the first lesson we learn from reflection.

Be charitable and indulgent to everyone but yourself.

The paternal hearth, that rallying place of the affections.

As every thread of gold is valuable, so is every minute of time.

Think of heaven with hearty purpose and strong hope to get there.

Our hasty actions disclose our habitual feelings as nothing else does.

Most men will go farther to give advice than to follow their own opinions.

Good intentions will not help a man on his way if he takes the wrong road.

Do good to all, that thou mayest keep thy friends and gain thine enemies.

Choose the right way, however rough, it will certainly prove easier than the wrong way.

Socrates, being asked the way to honest fame, said, "Study to be what you wish to seem."

It is bad reasoning which builds up a theory of life on the narrow ledge of a passing human mood.

Many men claim to be firm in their principles, when really they are only obstinate in their prejudices.

Of all quarrels, the most senseless, the most bootless, the most worrying, is a quarrel with our circumstances.

If it be the characteristic of a worldly man that he consecrates what is holy, it should be of the Christian to consecrate what is secular, and to recognise a present and presiding divinity in all things.

Femininities.

Grand Rapids, Mich., women have organized a brass band.

A kind of ant in Honduras will prey upon houses, and when once started will soon eat one down.

Marriageable young girls in Kansas make it a point to take up a land claim as the first step toward securing a husband.

Cultivate punctuality. Few women appreciate the value of time, and, as a rule, their watches are not to be relied upon.

That women do not become bald so often as men is probably because they preserve the cushion of fat under the scalp longer than men do.

A lady in Saline county, Mo., came within 18 votes of beating the most popular man in the county for the office of Register of Deeds.

The crazy-quilt craze has had a variation in Connecticut, where a woman has embroidered the notes and words of "Home, Sweet Home" on a linen sheet.

"She forgot the Lord and all His blessings, and after that went and got married," is a quotation from a rejected contribution to one of the Chicago papers.

One of the allegations in a suit for divorce brought by a Jeffersonville, Ind., bride of a year is that her husband failed to keep his promise to buy her a silk dress.

Too much for his strength. Elevator boy, to fat old lady: "Goin' up, mum?" Old lady: "Yes, I'm goin' up; but sakes alive, a little boy like you can't pull me up in that thing."

Husband: "A general war in Europe this coming year would be a dreadful thing." Wife, who contemplates a trip abroad: "Yes, indeed. It would so interfere with our plans for the summer."

Little onyx tables which are used in parlors for pedestals are shown in many styles mounted in brass. There are a variety of easels in brass, which are now generally preferred to an easel of wood.

Bride, exchanging bridal costume for traveling suit: "Did I appear nervous at all during the ceremony, Clara?" Bridesmaid, curious: "A little at first, dear; but not after George had said 'yes'."

This remark upon Jenny Lind appears in an English paper: "If ever an angel leaning over the crystal battlements happened to let a voice slip out of her possession it fell upon the cradle of Jenny Lind."

Ladies, read and smile not: A Nashville undertaker is authority for the statement that, in accordance with the dying request of a lady buried in that city recently, her new bonnet was interred with her.

It seems to be a pretty well understood fact that the average American woman of to-day, at least in the cities, is much heavier and better built than those of a generation or two ago. So much for athletic sports.

Some watercresses which the wife of General Crook threw out of a car window in Arizona a few years ago fell into a stream, took root, and now watercress abounds in that part of the Territory, where it was unknown before.

A Wilkesbarre woman on three different occasions recently arose from her bed and walked about town while asleep. On her third walk she wandered to a cemetery, where she was found asleep the next morning and almost frozen to death.

Mr. Oldboy, a bachelor: "It's all over, Gussy, my boy. Miss Smith has refused me." Gussy: "I suppose she let you down easy by promising to be a sister to you?" Mr. Oldboy, bitterly: "No, b'thunder; she said she would be a daughter to me!"

Amateur marketing. Young housekeeper, to fish dealer: "What kind of fish have you this morning?" Fish dealer: "How would you like to have some nice striped bass, mum?" Y. H., hesitatingly: "No; I think I would prefer something in a small check."

A nice accessory to a closet without drawers, suitable for laying in a nice dress, is to make one or more bags to cover over a nice dress, and thus protect it from dust. These bags are made longer than the dress skirt and button up. They are hung up by loops.

Miss Ethel: "Mr. Featherly paid you a very handsome compliment last night, Clara." Miss Clara: "Oh, did he? What was it?" Miss Ethel: "He spoke of your new black velvet suit, and thought he never saw you look so well. 'It is wonderful,' he said, 'what a difference dress makes with some people.'"

A Pensacola mother, temporarily deprived of the services of a nurse, has adopted a novel mode of keeping baby out of mischief and in content at the same time. Placing all of his playthings in a washtub, she puts the little fellow in with them, and there he plays, unable to get out, and perfectly happy until he gets sleepy or hungry.

"Yes," said Smitherkins, as he leaned back from the dinner-table; "they do say that a woman's work is never done." "And that is just where they're right," said Mrs. Smitherkins promptly; "and I am glad to see that you are beginning to realize what a time I have. What made you think of it?" "That pie!" returned Smitherkins quietly.

A remarkable specimen of grave yard taste has just been received at Menosha, destined for a cemetery there. It is a 16-ton stone in the form of a tree, with birds and squirrels in its branches, ferns at its base, also a large cross, a pot of stone flowers, an open book and a roll of music. By some oversight the cabinet organ was omitted. The stone was made for the grave of a young woman.

May and Edith are sisters 4 and 5 years old respectively. May had been very naughty, and mamma had taken her over her knee to administer corporal punishment, when Edith suddenly pushed the door ajar and peeped in. Turning her chubby face as far round to her sister as the peculiar position would admit, May said very gravely: "Go right out, Edie! Don't you see I'm busy?" It is needless to add that mamma granted a respite.

Masculinities.

Never go to bed with cold or damp feet.

Always eat breakfast before you begin a journey.

It is the wooden-headed man whose head is easily turned.

Never take warm drinks and then immediately go out in the cold.

Men are too much inclined to accept a pretty woman at her face value.

August Shields, of Hunt county, Texas, is 7 feet 10 inches tall, and is still growing.

There is a big difference between getting on well in life and getting well on in life.

A Russian miser learned to bark in order to save the expense of keeping a watch dog.

An umbrella thief was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment in New York recently.

It is not decided that women love more than men, but it is indisputable that they love better.

An Atchison man recently acted as a pall-bearer at a funeral and usher at a wedding the same day.

Vanity is as ill at ease under indifference as tenderness is under the love which it cannot return.

It is at a circus, when he can keep his hat on, that a bald-headed man is really independent.

Pope Leo has received among his jubilee gifts a woolen petticoat, worked by a poor woman and her crippled daughter.

"Are you a Home Ruler?" was asked of one of the candidates at a late election. A voice from the back seats answered: "No; but his wife is!"

The proper thing in neckwear among the swells of San Antonia, Texas, is a scarf made of rattlesnake skin, with a pin composed of the snake's rattles.

Rev. O. H. Walker, of New London, Ct., has a remarkable record as an industrious preacher. He has been absent from his pulpit only 2 Sundays in 25 years.

Little sister, angrily: "Now you do what I say!" Little brother: "I won't!" "You won't, eh? Oh, don't I just wish we was grown up and you was my husband."

A young man, obliged to invent instantly some excuse for a long golden hair on his coat sleeve, stammered out that he "sat next to the b-b-butter at dinner."

Mr Smartun: "No, Miss Jones, they can't deceive me; I am not such a big fool as I look." Miss Jones, endeavoring to flatter: "No, indeed; I discovered that long ago."

Maud, awakening suddenly at 3 A. M.: "Mother, there's a man trying to break into the house." Mother, wearily: "Hush, my child; it's your father; he's afraid to ring the door-bell."

Omaha wife: "What under the sun are you doing?" Husband: "Trying to tie this string around my finger." "Why, I did not ask you to do any errand." "No; this string is to remind me that I have nothing to remember to-day."

King Umberto, of Italy, in chatting over the decoration scandal in Paris, said with a smile "There are two things my father never refused even to a mendicant in the street—a cigar from his case and the Cross of the Crown of Italy."

Lover, passionately: "My sweet! my darling! I love you with all my heart! Be mine!" Fair maiden: "Oh, William, this is so sudden; I must have time—" Lover: "No, no! I must have my answer now, for I have my eye on another girl."

The Rev. Daniel P. Pike, whose death has lately been announced at Newburyport, Mass., is credited with preaching 500 sermons, marrying more than 350 persons, conducting more than 200 funerals, and baptising (by immersion) nearly 1100 converts.

Mrs. Hendricks, the landlady: "You are not looking at all well this morning, Mr. Dumley. Have you eaten anything, do you think, that distresses you?" Mr. Dumley, the boarder: "No, ma'am; I think it is something I have not eaten that distresses me."

The celebrated Lessing, the German poet, was remarkable for a frequent absence of mind. Having missed money at different times without being able to discover who took it, he determined to put the honesty of his servant to a trial, and left a handful of gold on the table. "Of course you counted it?" said one of his friends. "Counted it?" said Lessing, rather embarrassed; "no, I forgot that."

The Duke of Sutherland laments that he has never been able to discover what it is best to do in life. He has by turns tried his hand at the improvement on a grand scale of his vast estate, at the improvement of Egypt, at denunciation of Mr. Gladstone, at being a fireman, at yachting, and even at the wild dissipation of an American tour, without the duchess, but has to own that life throughout to him is "a bore".

A theatrical performance for the benefit of a murderer is probably a unique event in the annals of the stage. The case occurred recently in Rome, where the net proceeds of a theatrical performance were awarded to Augusto Rinelli, lately sentenced to 20 years' hard labor for killing his wife—a crime of which popular opinion holds him to be innocent. The money is to be applied to rendering the convict's life in prison more endurable.

The ex-King of Oude, who lately died at Calcutta, was as particular about neatness and cleanliness as the proverbial Dutch housewife. If, when walking in his gardens, he found a stray bird's feather among the flowers or a few straws or withered leaves lying about he would fine the gardener and the watchman of the day three days' pay. The same penalty was inflicted on any in-door servant who left a speck of dust or scrap of litter about the palace, where floors, walls and furniture were being dusted and cleaned all day long.

Recent Book Issues.

"Locrine," by the great poet, Swinburne, treats of the loves of Locrine, King of Britain, and Estrild, a German princess, and the sorrows of Queen Guendolen. It is a work of surpassing charm. There are countless fine lines in it, pleasing the ear with their music and the mind by their thought. The interest of its tragic story will enchain the attention of the reader who fairly enters upon its perusal. Published by Worthington, New York. For sale by Wilson, No. 111 South Eleventh street.

"Only a Year, and What It Brought" is a home story that is fresh, sweet, and freighted with many useful lessons. It tells of a twelve months' occurrences in the life of members of a New England family, and every reader—more particularly the young—will find head and heart put in the way of content and improvement by perusing it. Jane Andrews, notable for having written many good tales, is the author. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston, and for sale by Lippincott & Co.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The January *Quiver* opens with a paper called the "Salt of the Earth," by Edward Garrett, which is followed by the serial, "Wanted, a Governess;" then Professor Blackie interprets "The Voice of Winter in Christian Ears;" the Dean of Canterbury's second paper showing "How God Preserved the New Testament," is given, and is followed by a very pretty story, "A Boat to Heaven." The first of a series of papers on "Pearls of Christian Song," "The Spinnets; a Reverie." "Second Floor Back," a story of tenement house life, together with stories and poetry, go to make up a characteristically excellent number of *The Quiver*. Cassell & Co., publishers, New York.

WHAT GLASS EYES COST.—The price of glass eyes is becoming cheaper on account of competition, and at the same time the quality is better than hitherto. A common glass eye may be had for $10, but they are not a good imitation and do not last long. A first-class eye costs $50, or even more. The best will not last over two years, because the secretions in the hollow of the eye roughen the glass by chemical action, and this roughness irritates the flesh. If a person could buy glass eyes at wholesale, by the gross, he could get them for about $2 apiece. But he would have to look over a great many before finding one to match his other eye in size, color and expression.

Glass eyes are all made abroad, principally in Germany and France, no factory having been started here, although there is a great demand for them in this country. A skilful oculist can put a glass eye into the cavity so that very close observation is necessary to detect it. Not only are the size and color of the natural eye counterfeited, but even the general expression. The oculist has yet to discover means of giving that sympathetic movement which distinguishes a pair of eyes. There is quite a large number of people with glass eyes, say 1 in 400.

PRECIOUS STONES.—Among certain eastern nations precious stones were associated with the months of the year, and the fortunes of human beings were believed to be influenced by the stone which belonged to the birth month.

The garnet is the stone of January, and, according to the belief, ensures consistency and fidelity.

The amethyst is the stone of February and it is claimed for it that it quiets violent passion and prevents drunkenness.

March has the bloodstone, courage and wisdom in great undertakings, and firmness in affection.

April, the blue sapphire, flees from enchantment, denotes repentance and kindness of disposition.

May, the emerald, discovers false witnesses, insures happiness in the home.

June, the agate, insures long life, health, and prosperity.

July, the ruby, discovers passion, cures evils springing from the unkindness of friends.

August, the sardonyx, ensures conjugal felicity.

September, the chrysolite, preserves from despair.

October, the opal, both the stone of misfortune and hope.

November, the pearl, tears and pity.

December, the turquoise, prosperity and love.

IMPROBABILITIES IN LATE NOVELS.—

"Her tone upset him."

"He dwelt ever in her thoughts."

"He fell back upon his own indifference."

"She piled coals of fire upon his head."

"He hung upon her lightest word."

"She withered him with a look."

"He was lost in reflection."

"It is not your fortune I desire."

"She came to him in his dreams."

"So far the world dreams not of our love."

"Her eyes were cast into futurity."

"She was mantled with his love."

"I have no thought that is not of you."

"I swear eternal constancy."

"You are my first love."

"His heart followed her to London."

"I am the queen of his affections."

A certain means of happiness is to keep Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup in every family.

For headache, toothache, earache, and backache Salvation Oil is a certain cure.

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.

It may interest women to learn that the islanders of New Guinea are married according, not to their own inclinations, but to those of their parents. They are most frequently affianced at a very tender age, but are afterwards forbidden to associate with each other. Indeed, this is carried so far that the girl may not even look at her future husband. Both must avoid all contact with the members, both male and female, of the family into which they are about to enter.

Their wedding ceremonies are characterized by a reserve and modesty very remarkable in a savage people of the tropics. Adorned with the most beautiful ornaments, the bride is conducted at night, in a torch-light procession, through the village. One woman carries her on her back, while another binds her arms, as though she were a captive, and leads her by the rope to the house of her betrothed. This is a symbol of slavery—a souvenir of the ancient servitude which the aristocratic class has preserved. There is nothing of this in the procession of the poor.

On reaching their destination, the bridegroom is presented to the bride's relatives, who lead him into her chamber. She awaits him with her back turned, indicating that she fears to meet his conquering gaze. The young man approaches till within two feet of her, turns on his heel, and then they are back to back in the midst of a numerous assembly—the men on one side, the women on the other.

After the entertainment, the bride is led into her own room, still not daring to meet the terrible glance of her husband, and keeping her back turned to the door. Seeing this, the husband also turns his back on her. The whole night is spent in this manner: they sit there motionless, having some one to brush away the flies, without speaking a word.

If they grow sleepy, some one of the assistants, who take turns in doing this service, nudges them with his elbow. If they keep wide awake, they are assured of a long life and green old age. In the morning they separate, still without looking at each other, in order to refresh themselves after the fatigues of the previous night.

This performance is continued for four nights, and on the fifth morning, with the first rays of the sun, the young people may look each other in the face. That suffices: the marriage is considered accomplished, and the newly-wedded pair receive the customary congratulations.

FUNERAL RITES.—From the very earliest times, the necessary act of disposing of a dead body has always been attended by ceremonies of some kind expressive of affection and grief, and also of the popular religious sentiment among those taking part therein. Funeral rites among the most primitive people always involved extravagant expressions of grief, such as tearing the hair, beating, and sometimes cutting, the body.

Funeral feasts have prevailed almost universally from the most barbarous ages down to the present time. These had their origin, no doubt, not simply in a desire to do honor to the dead, but in the belief that the departed spirit also took part in the good cheer.

The rude music which usually formed part of the funeral ceremony among uncivilized races was undoubtedly intended to ward off the evil spirits which were supposed to be in the vicinity of a corpse.

Funeral dirges were adopted as an expression of poignant grief. These were an important part of funeral rites among the Greeks.

The Egyptians held a tribunal over the dead. Any one was allowed to bring to this tribunal accusations against the corpse; and if it were shown that he had lived an evil life, burial was refused. If no accusation was brought, the relatives ceased lamenting, and pronounced encomiums on the dead, enlarging upon his many virtues.

The laudations of the dead, to which we may trace the funeral sermon of the present day, probably originated with the Jews. The Greeks had funeral orations, in which they gave a full history, not only of the deceased, but of all his ancestors. The Romans took this custom from the Greeks.

The funeral customs of the early Christians were partly adopted from the Romans, and modified so as to express the belief in a resurrection. They adopted the customs of vigils also, in which the survivors were expected to ponder upon the shortness and uncertainty of life, and "the narrow house appointed for all living". A service also took place at the grave, the object of which was originally to declare the belief of the survivors in the future rising of the body. This service was abolished in Scotland at the Reformation, and a service and exhortation in the church or at the dead man's house were substituted. A part of the old service is still performed at the grave by all Roman Catholics, and by all who use the form of burial adopted by the English Church, but many Protestants omit it.

THE FRENCHMEN'S DINNER.—How true is it that few of us know what we are really eating. The manner in which a cultured appetite can be deceived with a most plebeian morsel is thus related:—

A bet was recently made by two French gourmands, one of whom asserted that he could detect the component parts of any dish set before him, the other betting at great odds that he would not be able to tell the material wherewith his cook would prepare a "savory" dish for them. The bet was taken—the one confident in his quick natural sense, the other on the skill of his cook. The cook—a Frenchmen—of course exerted all his talents and surpassed all praise. The dish was placed before the knowing epicure. He tastes, smacks his lips, tastes again, smells it—tastes again. Alas! it is redolent of all rich odours; such gravy, such solids—so soft, so tender! What can it be? A wondrous prepared tripe? No! Calf's head in a new shape? No, no, no! a thousand "Noes." Our epicure gives it up. "It is old white kid gloves!" is the cool explanation when the bet is resigned as lost.

THE MARCH OF WEEDS.—Our American Indians call the Plantain the Footsteps-of-the-Whites, as though produced by the tread of the European pioneers; it certainly has followed the European colonists wherever they have gone, and is now found in all parts of the world, carried through man's unconscious aid from its original home in Northern Asia. This plant was found in Northwest America by early explorers, and may have been carried there by early Aleutian colonists from its home across Behring Straits.

The Thorn Apple, a native of Eastern Asia, was gradually spread all over Europe by gypsy bands, who made frequent use of its poisonous qualities. After the war of the deliverance the Tick seed, a plant allied to our pig-weed and confined originally to the steppes of the Dnieper, was found wherever the Cossacks had encamped. Our Water Weed, here a harmless plant, growing in ponds and shallow streams, was introduced to England about 1842; it began immediately to spread with great rapidity through the sub-division of its roots and stems alone, and soon filled ponds and rivers all over Great Britain, in many cases to such an extent as to seriously interfere with navigation.

HOW OILCLOTH IS MADE.—Oilcloth for floors is made on stout hemp canvas, which is woven very wide so as to have no seams in it. This canvas is first stretched tightly over a frame; then is covered with thin glue, or size, and rubbed down with pumice.

This is to fill in the spaces between the threads, and make the whole very smooth. Then a coating of thick paint is spread over the surface and rubbed in with a trowel. When this is dry, another thick coat is put on, and after that another, and then a coat of thin paint, laid on with a brush. All of these are of one color, and after they have been put on and dried, the pattern of the oilcloth is printed on by means of wooden blocks. The outline of the design is cut on these blocks, and for different colors different blocks are used.

Oilcloth for table-covers is made of light cloth or canvas, on which two coats, or perhaps three, of common paint are laid on, and the design is then printed in the same way that calico is printed.

BUILDING CHURCHES.—In early Christian times it was said that no church or other edifice would stand firmly unless the foundations were laid in blood. Usually some animal was placed under the corner-stone—a dog, a sow, a wolf, a black cock, a goat, sometimes the body of a malefactor who had been executed for his crimes.

WANAMAKER'S.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 12, 1887.

There's nothing that a boy, a girl, a man or a woman wants to wear or fit the home properly with, that we haven't got, and at the least price.

The likely-to-be-gift things are the forward ones all over the Store. Substantial, reliable, everyday articles are none the less because of that, but some of them have been pushed back a little by the flood of Christmas-cheer comers.

A DRESS PATTERN OF RICH FAILLE Francaise would be one of the most welcome presents that could well be given to a lady. What was $1.75 to $3.25 now $1.50 to $2.50. Blacks.

A new Cloaking for children 50 in., $2.

Seal Skin Cloth 50 in., $3 to $15 a yd.

SILK MUFFLERS $3. OUR LAST SEASON price $4.50.

Colored, 75c to $2; cream $1, $1.25 and $1.50.

China Silk Handkerchiefs 25, 40, and 50c.

Japanese Silk, heavy and extra heavy, 50c to $1.50 each.

Imperial weight, 22, 24, 26 inch; $1.50, $2.75, $3 each.

Silk Bandanas, red, yellow, and chocolate grounds, fancy figures $1, $1.25 and $1.50.

Old Fashioned tie patterns $1.25, $1.50, $1.75.

SEAMLESS FOOT-WARMERS COME NEAR TO IT. Strips of thick woolen, basket-woven, lined with wool, pliant leather soles; hand-made—

Women's high cut, $1.50; Men's low cut, $1.50. Same style, "Ladies' Boudoir," light blue, dark blue, and scarlet, $2.

WHAT IS IN THE BASEMENT THIS YEAR? It was hard enough in former years to tell the story of Toys and Baskets and Rattan Furniture and Lamps and the thousand of house fixings; but now, with more and better, it can never be told. Seeing is believing sure.

Polyopticon, with 100 pictures, $4.50. Show any picture colored or plain—photograph or newspaper cutting.

The oldest and newest of the Tops plays a regular tune while spinning. $2.50.

Copies in oil of the principal pictures of this year's French Salon. Expressive color bits, with about every beauty of the originals, except originality. In rich frames, $2.50 to $21.

Let this item from the Art corner of the Basement stand for a hundred.

Canary birds $1.75 each. Cages, $1, to $12.

FROM CHESTNUT STREET TO MARKET Street along the Talleenth Street side Books, Books, and Christmas Cards and Novelties and Calendars.

December BOOK NEWS (36 pages, illustrated) may now be had. 5 cents, 50 cents a year.

We reckon the Dickens Calendar the brightest, prettiest of all. Everybody who likes Dickens will like this Calendar. The edition is limited, and there will be none to sell at low prices, as is sometimes the case after the first of January. 50 cents, by mail 55 cents.

If you write for samples say as near as may be what kind. If you write for goods say how you'll have them sent—mail, express or freight.

JOHN WANAMAKER.
Philadelphia.

R. R. R. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

In from one to twenty minutes never fails to relieve PAIN with one thorough application. No matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the Rheumatic, Bedridden, Infirm, Crippled, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with disease may suffer, Radway's Ready Relief will afford instant ease. It instantly relieves and soon cures

Rheumatism,	**Neuralgia,**
Coughs,	**Colds,**
Cold in the Head,	**Sore Throat,**
Asthma,	**Bronchitis,**
Pneumonia,	**Sciatica,**
Headache,	**Inflammations,**
Toothache,	**Congestion.**

Strong Testimony from Honorable George Starr as to the Power of Radway's Ready Relief in a Case of Sciatic Rheumatism.

NO. 3 VAN NESS PLACE, New York.

DR. RADWAY: With me your Relief has worked wonders. For the last three years I have had frequent and severe attacks of sciatica, sometimes extending from the lumbar regions to my ankles, and, at times, in both lower limbs.

During the time I have been afflicted I have tried almost all the remedies recommended by wise men and fools, hoping to find relief, but all proved to be failures.

I have tried various kinds of baths, manipulations, outward applications of liniments too numerous to mention, and prescriptions of the most eminent physicians, all of which failed to give me relief.

Last September, at the urgent request of a friend (who had been afflicted as myself), I was induced to try your remedy. I was then suffering fearfully with one of my old turns. To my surprise and delight the first application gave me ease, after bathing and rubbing the parts affected, leaving the limb in a warm glow, created by the Relief. In a short time the pain passed entirely away, although I have slight periodical attacks approaching a change of weather, I know now how to cure myself, and feel quite master of the situation. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF is my friend. I never travel without a bottle in my valise. Yours truly,

GEO. STARR.

Radway's Ready Relief is a Cure for Every Pain, Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest or Limbs. It was the First and is the Only PAIN REMEDY

that instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels or other glands or organs.

INTERNALLY, a half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will, in a few minutes, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Colic, Flatulency and all internal pains.

Malaria in Its Various Forms Cured and Prevented.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious and other fevers, aided by RADWAY'S PILLS, so quickly as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

R. R. R. not only cures the patient seized with Malaria, but if people exposed to the Malarial poison will every morning take 20 or 30 drops of Ready Relief in water, and eat, say a cracker, before going out, they will prevent attacks.

Travellers should always carry a bottle of RADWAY'S READY RELIEF with them. A few drops in water will prevent sickness or pains from change of water. It is better than French Brandy or Bitters as a stimulant.

Fifty cents per bottle. Sold by druggists.

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT,

The Great Blood Purifier

For the cure of all chronic diseases, Chronic rheumatism, scrofulous complaints, etc., glandular swellings, barking dry cough, cancerous affections, bleeding of the lungs, dyspepsia, water brash, white swellings, tumors, ulcers, hip disease, gout, dropsy, rickets, salt rheum, bronchitis, consumption, liver complaints, etc.

HEALTH! BEAUTY!

Pure blood makes sound flesh, strong bone and a clear skin. If you would have your flesh firm, your bones sound, and your complexion fair, use RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

The wonderful cures effected by the Sarsaparillian Resolvent; its powers over the Kidneys in establishing a healthy secretion of urine, curing diabetes, inflammation or irritation of the bladder, albuminous or brick dust deposits or white sand, etc., establishing its character as A GREAT CONSTITUTIONAL REMEDY.

Sold by all druggists. One Dollar a bottle.

RADWAY'S PILLS,

The Great Liver and Stomach Remedy,

For the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Loss of Appetite, Headache, Costiveness, Indigestion, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals, or deleterious drugs.

PERFECT DIGESTION

Will be accomplished by taking one of Radway's Pills every morning about ten o'clock, as a dinner pill. By so doing

SICK HEADACHE

Dyspepsia, Foul Stomach, Biliousness will be avoided, and the food that is eaten contribute its nourishing properties for the support of the natural waste of the body.

Observe the following symptoms resulting from Diseases of the digestive organs: Constipation, inward piles, fulness of the blood in the head, acidity of the stomach, nausea, heartburn, disgust of food, fulness or weight in the stomach, sour eructations, sinking or fluttering of the heart, choking or suffocating sensations when in a lying posture, dimness of vision, dots or webs before the sight, fever and dull pain in the head, deficiency of perspiration, yellowness of the skin and eyes, pain in the side, chest, limbs and sudden flushes of heat, burning in the flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above named disorders.

PRICE, 25 cents Per Box. Sold by all druggists.

Send a letter stamp to RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren street, New York.

Information worth thousands will be sent you

Humorous.

A MELLIFLUOUS MADRIGAL.

My Madeline, my Madeline,
  Mark my melodious midnight mosus!
Mush may my melting music mean,
  My modulated monotones!

My mandolin's mild minstrelsy,
  My mental music magazine,
My mouth, my mind, my memory,
  Must, mingling, murmur "Madeline!"

Muster 'mid midnight masqueraces—
  Mark Moorish maidens, matrons, men—
'Mongst Murcia's most majestic maids
  Match me my matchless Madeline.

Mankind's malevolence may make
  Much melancholy mantle mine;
Many my motives may mistake,
  My modest merits much malign.

My Madeline's most mirthful mood
  Much mollifies my mind's machine;
My mournfulness's magnitude
  Melts—makes me merry, Madeline!

Matchmaking ma's may machinate,
  Manœuvring misses me misween;
More money may make many mate—
  My magic motto's "Madeline!"

Melt, most mellifluous melody,
  'Midst Murcia's misty mounts marine;
Meet me 'neath moonlight—marry me,
  Madonna mia—Madeline!

—ORCUS PYRAM.

Many men would rather dye than have gray whiskers.

A great many men are troubled with disease of the I's.

Fools rush in on a lightning express train where angels would hesitate to approach on a canal boat.

Simon seated himself beside his sweetheart driving: "Sally, I wish I was a fish and you was bait. Jiminy, how I'd bite!"

The best reason yet advanced for having Monday, washing day, the next after Sunday, is because cleanliness is next to godliness.

The gentleman so often spoken of in novels who riveted people with his gaze has now obtained permanent employment at a boiler manufactory.

"Prisoner, you acknowledge having stolen several bales of hay from the gentleman. What urged you to commit this crime?" "Hunger, your honor."

An advertisement reads: "Wanted, a young man to be partly out of doors and partly behind the counter," and a lady has written to ask, "What will be the result when the door slams?"

He, at late breakfast: "My dear, did you go through my pockets before I got up this morning?" She: "No! I thought from the condition you were in when you came in last night that it would hardly warrant the trouble."

Some people are determined to steal, and are not particular about what it is they lay their pilfering fingers on. How else can the breaking open of a freight car in Allegheny and the theft of a tombstone be explained?

Young wife: "How awful! The paper says a young man who had only been married three months went to his room and committed suicide." Young husband, with affected interest: "Eh! How?" "He hanged himself with his suspenders." "Well, I suppose his buttons were all off and he hadn't any other use for suspenders."

George: "You look sleepy, John." John: "I did not get to bed until 3 o'clock this morning. I was out sailing on my girl." "Three o'clock! I should think the old man would have come down stairs with a shotgun." "Her father is a widower and courting a lady in the next block. I never have to leave until he comes home."

They had not been married long, and she made her own pastry. One night she thought she heard a burglar in the house. "I think," she whispered, "he's in the pantry, John." "All right," was the practical reply, born of experience; "just wait until he has eaten a bit of your pie, and then I'll get up and put a finishing touch to him."

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Latest Fashion Phases.

The first impression after a cursory glance at the new fashions and materials of the present season, is that there has never been so great a variety. A second glance shows us that the draped costumes are seldom made of anything but soft, light materials, plain or with embroidered or brocaded patterns.

Costumes of two woolen materials, or of plain woolen and fancy silk, handsome dresses in rich silks, either embroidered, brocaded or braided, are all made with straight folds and long, light draping. In fact, stripes predominate, either in the material itself or laid on in ornamented bands, which necessitate a flatter and plainer style of making.

The self-toned material is generally used for the bodice and upper skirt, and the fancy or striped silk for the underskirt. Fancy silks are the most fashionable—that is to say, silk with patterns, stripes, or flowers of one shade upon a different ground, like broche velvet, then either plush and moire, velvet and moire, or peau de soie are placed in long stripes, either narrow or wide.

Plain velvet and plush are little used, except when they are shot. The old style of velvet, so handsome in itself, is discarded, or only used for bodies, or mixed with brilliantly striped silks. Plain plush, with either long or short pile, is used for dress-trains, carriage mantles and evening wear.

The most successful dress of the season is perhaps of plain cloth, trimmed with embroidery, either worked on cloth itself or separately upon stripe of different material, such as white serge or cloth of a lighter shade than the dress.

These trimmings are made with close stripes of thick gold braid, handsome galons, bands of metal—gold, silver, steel, copper, etc.,—worked upon a light net ground, called "cotte de maille."

These cloth costumes are usually worn for friendly visits and walking, with either a toque or bonnet without strings, or very narrow strings without a bow, fastened on the side with a tiny brooch or jeweled pin. the small muff must be of the same material and trimmed as the dress.

The short mantles of velvet, silk, and plush are almost hidden beneath the trimmings of beads, passementerie, or fur.

Lighter shades of fur seem regaining favor—blue fox, silver fox, beaver, chinchilla, and fancy shades like real beaver. Real Astrachan, either white or black, is always popular. Any of these furs can be used to trim cloth costumes.

The long redingotes or visites completely hide the dress. They touch the ground, and are worn with a skirt of plain silk, either pleated or trimmed in front; very little of them, like a narrow apron, is visible, and this little is called "moufiat." These long mantles, when worn for driving, are left in the carriage, and visits from four o'clock to seven are made en taille. The mantles are generally made in thick gros-grain silk, with flat panel sides of broche velvet, a dark shade on a light ground. They are trimmed in front with a band of fur, either blue fox, Russian sable, or real beaver.

The best colors for these long mantles are brown mordore, very dark blue, seal-brown, black and dark copper. Thus the velour ciselé must be the same tint as the silk, upon a light ground, such as maize, sky-blue, chamois, vieux rose. The lining is also of the light shade, but plain; either Surah, Merveilleux, or thin brocatelle.

For visits also costumes are worn with a short, close-fitting pelerine, trimmed with fur, which is taken off on entering the room. The muff and bonnet must always match.

A very elegant toilet is of dead-leaf colored cashmere over a dark green ground. The skirt was slightly gathered, and simply trimmed with three rows of stitching. The tunic formed a long draped tablier, leaving uncovered all the left side of the skirt, with a very simple puff made at the back.

The bodice was of a very new shape. The left-side front was fitted as usual, and buttoned in the middle with a right side front of lining. Over this piece of lining an ample flowing front was crossed from the left shoulder, and fastened down with a tab of dark green velvet, embroidered with old-gold beads, which commenced from the shoulder; from under the point of the tab the fulness of the bodice was draped and fell into a puff, along which are fastened a series of small tassels of old-gold beads which makes it fall gracefully.

Pretty draperies are made apart from bodices, on to which they are adapted at pleasure. They are generally made of soft silk, such as foulard or surah, or of silk crape.

A new pattern is of coral-pink surah, draped near the left shoulder and gathered at the waist-line. The high collar is fastened on the left side with a bow of coral-pink ribbon. A fringe of loops of very narrow ribbon of the same color is put on all down the right side.

It is fashionable to wear facings to match upon the sleeves to complete the parure; this one looks well upon dresses of almost any shade of gray, brown, green, purple or dark red, for the daytime; and can also be worn over a light-colored toilet for the evening. In creamy white it will look best over a blue or pink dress.

A novelty in evening dresses will be spotted colored tulle draped over silk of the same color. This will make up very pretty dinner and evening costumes for the winter.

Very elegant dresses for the same purpose are also made of self-colored silk crepe, chiefly in light shades, such as cream, mauve, pale blue or rose-color; the underskirt is of faille to match, trimmed, around the foot either with several narrow pinked-out flounces, or with a deep puffing of spotted tulle point d'esprit.

Young girls wear dresses of white veiling draped over skirts of glace silk shot of two colors.

The coiffure is still a disputed question, the adherents of the Psyche style being as many as those of the catogan. Some combine both styles, heaping up coils of hair on the top of the head, and massing the rest in a heavy knot on the neck; but this requires an immense quantity of hair. The most usual style at present is to comb up the hair and arrange it in the shape of a diadem, leaving only a few curls or waves to fall over the forehead.

Bonnets will very probably be much larger next season than they have been for the last few years, and the modification of their shape will no doubt influence that of the new style of hair-dressing.

The large Empire bonnet is once more in great favor; it is becoming to ladies of elegance and distinction who dress in good style; the border is not flaunting as in the days of Josephine, it protrudes over the forehead, large and flat, sometimes slightly raised on the left side.

A handsome model is of green velvet, draped over both crown and border; a cluster of pretty ostrich feathers is placed at the back.

The Fenella bonnet, much in the same style, has the large flat border and the crown quite low; in front there is a large-headed jet pin, around which is placed a double lace flounce which falls over the crown and veils it over completely; a small cluster of black feathers placed very much at the back completes the trimming.

Some very large shapes, in fine black felt, recall the models of La Grande Mademoiselle; they are clustered all over with feathers, and one long Amazon feather droops at the back; the large flapping border is entirely lined with good velvet.

All these immense bonnets are very stylish, but they are not suitable for wearing in the street on foot; they require a private carriage and very elegant dress.

For simple walking costumes there are very charming little toquets and small capotes. A pretty toquet is of absinthe-green moire velvet, shot with fire-color, trimmed with a pretty imitation of valenciennes lace, which is quilled in the centre of a velvet drapery.

A small capote has its low crown covered with golden-bronze plush; the border is draped with golden-bronze velvet, and a small cluster of blade-feathers turned down into a loop, is placed at the foot of the crown, with snake-like ornaments of jet.

In new materials, pekins with wide stripes are a great success. Very stylish dresses are made with pekins striped with satin and moire, or brocade of exquisite elegance.

There are white pekins for wedding-dresses, which are remarkably rich; but still, in spite of fashion, we prefer for brides, dresses of white satin or of merveilleux surah.

For the street cloth costumes are lady-like; many are pinked out around the edge. Almost all these dresses are ornamented with rich passementerie in new patterns.

Odds and Ends.

ABOUT OUR HOMES IN WINTER.

Window curtains should be treated as much from the decorative as from the utilitarian point of view; of course any thick curtain, however ugly and ill-chosen, will keep out draughts, but only well-selected hangings, suitable to the room, its furniture, and its occupants, can give that character of harmony, repose and comfort which is one of the chief objects to be kept in view in furnishing.

Again, the arrangement of curtains differs very much in town and country houses. In town unpleasant views have sometimes to be masked as much as possible, but without obstructing the light, never much too strong in town houses.

The back windows of most houses rarely have a good look out, and where they look into a yard, or are very close to those of one's opposite neighbors, some such arrangement as the one I am about to describe may be followed with advantage: The undercurtains are of extremely clear cream-colored etamine, edged with narrow guipure to match. They are drawn back a little at the sides to allow the light to fall on the plants in the jardiniere, or if it be filled with imitation plants, the curtains may be allowed to fall straight to the ground, veiling the window entirely. The outer curtains are of a new fabric striped with plush, and resemble those used in the front drawing-room; they are draped at the top and connected by a deep valance drawn up with rich cord and tassel ornaments, similar cord and tassels are used for drawing the curtains back at the sides, and the edges of the curtains and valance are bordered with fringe. When there is sufficient wall space between the top of the window and the cornice of the ceiling, a portion of the valance and cornice might be on the wall, as the deep drapery covering all the top of the window might easily intercept more of the light than could be spared.

In country houses the white transparent undercurtains are not required; the windows, as a rule, look on to the garden or grounds, and there is no need to guard against the indiscretion of opposite neighbors. But the arrangement of the heavy striped curtains is extremely fashionable, and suitable for both town or country house.

Curtains and portieres of real and imitation Eastern and Egyptian fabrics are very much used this winter, and are very rich looking, and by no means expensive. All the best furnishing houses have these curtains; they are thick and somewhat rough in texture, and do not require lining. The patterns being Eastern in coloring and character, the curtains can be used with all but very marked styles of furniture. The sides are bordered with a band in a different pattern, and many have a wider band forming a kind of dado at the edge, and a different but equally wide band at the top. The curtains being heavy, are very simply made up, either slightly pleated, with hooks to slip into the eyes on the curtain rings, or else they are quite plain and flat at the top. No valance or head ornament of any kind is used, and the curtains are suitable for dining-rooms, studies, libraries, etc.

Tapestry, in wool only, or in silk and wool mixed, makes excellent and inexpensive window curtains; most of the woolen tapestries are reversible and do not require lining, but for bed-rooms and morning-rooms, should a lining be required, Turkey twill will be found to answer very well indeed.

Cretonne and chintz bed-room curtains may also be very effectively lined with Turkey twill, provided the brilliancy of color of the twill harmonizes with the material. There are also colored cotton twills and Bolton Sheetings which make excellent inexpensive linings for curtains. Bolton Sheetings are indeed so cheap that, where great economy is necessary, they may be used as the curtains themselves; however, would only be suitable for bed-rooms.

Curtains of damask, [illegible] and other materials, which have been in use for many years, and are too faded to be utilized as curtains, may be lengthened and widened by the addition of borders and dados of some other material, plain or embroidered if the curtain material be plain. Odd pieces of brocade, damask, tapestry, velvet, plush, etc., come in most usefully for these renovations; the border at the sides should be from 6 to 9 inches wide, the dado at the foot may be of any depth, from 10 to 24 inches.

A son of Erin, having offered his services to cut some ice, was asked if he could use the cross-cut saw. He replied "he could surely." He was sent accordingly in company with his co-laborer to cut some ice, and on reaching the centre of the pond the saw was produced with both handles still in their places. The verdant son, looking at the saw, very coolly put his hand in his pocket, and drawing from it a cent turned to his companion, and, raising the coin, said: "Now, Jamie, fair play; head or tail, who goes below?"

Confidential Correspondents.

A. E.—The pains in your chest and side after walking fast are not pleasant. You had better have your heart and lungs examined by a physician.

HELEN C.—Love is like fruit—it must be ripe before it is worth gathering. Wait patiently—the springtime of courtship should not be skipped over in a hurry.

ETIQUETTE.—If a lady acknowledges a gentleman in the street, it is the duty of the latter's friend, being with him, to join in returning the greeting.

H. B.—The first naval screw vessel was the Archimedes, built for the English navy in 1840. She was so successful that comparatively few ocean paddle steamers were afterwards constructed.

SHELLBACK.—Benzine is an excellent solvent for indiarubber or gutta-percha. They may also be dissolved in naphtha, ether, bisulphide of carbon, chloroform, or spirits of turpentine.

P. T.—Our advice to you is pop the question at once. Irresolution in love is worse than cowardice in battle. The familiar adage, "Strike while the iron is hot," has a strong significance in all affairs of the heart.

A. E. D.—The "correct" thing is for the lady to take the gentleman's arm. When the proceeding is reversed an act of courtesy becomes a caress, such as is only permissible between persons who are engaged.

DERBET.—The word Marquis or Marquess was in early times used to denote the Marchers—that is, the lords or custodians of the marches or borders. It was first used as a title of honor in that country by Richard II., who made De Vere, Marquis of Dublin; the etymology of the word being entirely ignored. Marquis ranks above an earl and below a duke.

DISPUTE.—The indemnity paid by France at the close of the Franco-German war was five milliards of francs—$1,000,000,000. The treaty in which this was set forth as one of the conditions of the cessation of hostilities was signed by Thiers, Jules Favre, and others on the 26th February, 1871, and accepted by the National Assembly on the 1st of March. The German troops entered Paris and remained there forty-eight hours—March 1st to 3d—quitting Versailles on the 25th of March.

ESSAY.—Longfellow is dead. 2. You want a literary essay packed in this space; we cannot supply you. De Quincey, master of sustained and elaborate prose, presents descriptions like those seen in wild dreams; he is rather a humorist—see his essay on "Murder as a Fine Art"—and an acute critic. Lord Lytton is brilliant, strained, fascinating, sometimes gushing and "high-falutin'"; Goldsmith, sweet, simple, tender, master of limpid couplets, prettiest of idyll-writers, fine dramatist. We hope you are satisfied.

J. R. T.—The story of Quentin Matsys, the Antwerp blacksmith who became an artist, is that he fell in love with the daughter of Johann Mandyn, the artist, and the father declared that none but an artist should have her to wife, so Matsys relinquished his trade and devoted himself to painting. After awhile he went to Mandyn's studio to see his picture of the "Fallen Angels," and on the outstretched leg of one of the figures painted a bee. This was so lifelike that when the old man returned he proceeded to frighten it off with his handkerchief. When he discovered his mistake he was so delighted that he at once gave his daughter to Matsys.

J. E.—It may be quite true that shepherds and others can by long practice distinguish one sheep's face from another's; but we cannot agree with you that the differences are at all comparable with those between the average mass of human countenances. It has long been noticed as a matter of comparative myology by good anatomists that the muscles and other components of the human face are liable to far greater variations from individual to individual than those of any other animal. It requires a practiced eye even to tell a horse from a horse; we have known educated men who never succeeded in accurately discriminating between the two that drew their own carriages.

SKELETON.—Your emaciation is due to want of muscular exercise. How can you expect a muscle to grow unless it is steadily used? If you walk and use the dumb-bells unflinchingly, then you will assimilate food which at present merely strains your digestive organs without repairing your wasted tissues. It is very strange, but persons of your peculiar habit of body often become stout and even corpulent. You have nothing to be alarmed about: girl needs regular exercise just as a man does, and, [illegible] neglect an elementary precaution, you must [illegible] to find yourself with delicate chest and weak [illegible]. Do not fret, but follow our advice; if you [illegible] from pain and stiffness at first, regard that as good sign.

WILDFIRE.—Keep clear of the man who showed your letter. Observe how dirtily shabby he is. First, your poor little letter comes into the hands of his fiancee, and, like a straightforward girl, she hands you back your own property. But this fine gentleman has scribbled on your letter, and, when he is asked to explain his comments, he tells lie No. 1—namely, that the letter was accidentally sent to the lady with whom he has quarrelled. Then he invents lie No. 2, and scarcely declares that the girl herself wrote the comments and imitated his hand-writing. He thus accuses a lady of falsehood and forgery! Evidently he takes you for a simpleton. If you meet this dangerous humbug, merely say, "You are far too big a noodle to succeed as a scoundrel," and then send him about his business.

ASTROLOGY.—The superstition which has suggested your pseudonym is one of the most ancient and wide-spread recorded in the history of human thought. We find it prevalent in the East at the very dawn of history. After the Captivity, the Jews became much addicted to it; and about the beginning of the Christian era it spread into the West. Some of the early Christian Fathers argued against it, but others of them received it in a modified form. The Roman Church several times condemned it, but many eminent Romanists professed it nevertheless. It had very wide prevalence in Christendom during the Middle Ages, and long afterwards, but has now virtually died out, although it is still a common belief in the East, and especially among Mohammedans, to whose fatalism it obviously adapts itself. As to how we "account for the truths which are sometimes predicted by astrologers," our reply is that we cannot account for the non-existent. If you will tell us what "truths" astrology has predicted we shall know where we are.